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THREE ARROWS

THE YOUNG
BUFFALO HUNTER



THREE ARROWS

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BUFFALO HUNTER

BY

E. RYERSON YOUNG
AUTHOR OF "DUCK LAKE"
AND "JUST DOGS"

NEW YORK
FRIENDSHIP PRESS

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Printed in the United States of America*

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4

THREE ARROWS

**THE YOUNG
BUFFALO HUNTER**



I

HOW THREE ARROWS GOT HIS NAME

WHEN At-toos Nish-to (which is to say, Three Arrows) was born, the old grandmother wanted to destroy him, to pinch the breath from his little throat and throw his body into the Saskatchewan River; but the mother, for some reason, took a great fancy to him.

“Awasis, awasis! (He’s such a little one!)” she cried. *“Let me keep him.”*

The stern old grandmother pointed out his grave faults. *“Narrow head, flat chest, over-long arms, one leg thinner and shorter than the other, deformed as well as malformed—he’ll never make a warrior. Better destroy him now, before anyone knows what kind of babe you have borne. It will then cause neither him nor his father any shame or sorrow.”*

“Awasis, awasis!” cried the mother, and held out her arms for her babe.

“Take it, then,” said the old woman indignantly, and handed the poor little deformed piece of humanity to its mother. Then, gathering up her blanket, she made her way out of the buffalo-skin wigwam.

The mother hugged the little fellow, crooned over him, and sank back exhausted on her blankets. The words of the grandmother had cut her to her soul, for she was a proud young woman, one of the strongest and finest looking in the tribe. She knew that it had been because of her good looks and straight limbs that the great chief had married her and looked to her to raise him sons; and now she had borne this little crumpled babe. But oh, he was such a little one! "*Awasis, awasis!*" she murmured again, as she held him close to her breast.

Then a great fear stole over her—the grandmother would tell the father and chief, and he would come and take the child away from her and destroy it. But, strange to say, no one came near her tent. All about was ominously still. The babe cried vigorously. "His breast may be flat, as the grandmother has said, but he has a clear, strong voice," declared the mother, and she gave him her breast. Fed and contented, the little fellow fell asleep, and so did the tired mother.

After a few hours' rest she struggled to her feet and looked out of the tent. The whole camp had moved on—not a sign of it was to be seen anywhere. Without help of any kind, woman or girl, dog or horse or any other living creature, she had been left alone on the prairie beside the swift-flowing river.

The spirit of fury broke in her. Seizing a club, she pounded the poles of the tent and raged through the whole of the camp site. Not a useful thing had been left; not a single piece of buffalo meat, fresh or dried, was to be found. She went back to her wigwam, desperately determined to brain the child, find the trail, and overtake the band. But when she threw back the flap of the tent the little fellow was lying curled up asleep on the blankets, looking like a little crumpled bird in his nakedness, his tiny shriveled leg pathetically prominent. The mother had thought it would be so, and that the sight would strengthen her resolve to destroy him. Instead it again awoke something within her that cried, "*Awasis, awasis!*!" And she could not hurt him. "He'll be no weight, anyway," she said. "I'll take him along."

Deftly she folded up her blankets, pulled the skins from the tent poles, and, using two of the poles, made for herself a travois, or carry-all. She did this by fastening two cross-pieces to the poles a few feet from the heavy ends, and fastening securely to them the four sides of a blanket. In this blanket she placed her possessions, and strapping the babe to her back she picked up the light ends of the poles and dragged her carry-all over the plains.

Three days afterward, more dead than alive, she came upon the encampment, found her mother's tent

and entered it. Here she rested for a few days while the look of pity that her mother gave the babe went almost deeper into her heart than the scorn of the other grandmother had done. So she built for herself a separate lodge and gave herself wholly to the care of her child.

Every day she bathed him in the river and rubbed his little limbs with fish oil and bear grease, with buffalo tallow and buffalo brains. He took his mother's persistent massaging with delight, and kicked and crowed. He seemed well and had a great appetite. With her rich, thrilling and penetrating voice she would sing to him, and that made him happy. The more she sang to him, the more he was ready to kick and play. The presence of his wife was reported to the chief, but he declared that he had no more use for her, and she took care to keep both her child and herself out of his sight.

The babe survived the winter but attained little growth. "Nevertheless he may live and be a great man yet," said the mother to herself.

One day in the springtime, as she had been sporting with her babe at the river side, dangling bright prairie flowers before his eyes, the chief's old mother passed by, took a sharp, savage look at the little fellow and grunted. "*Namaw, caqui mewashin!* (Good-for-nothing!)" she exclaimed, and passed on.

The young mother sprang to her feet and fled to her tent.

That afternoon the chief himself appeared, and the woman met him quickly at the tent door. He was plainly angry and had come to quarrel with her. He was angry because she had kept alive the child that his mother had described and condemned; and yet he could not bring himself to mention the cause of his anger. The woman was cool and composed and almost challenged him to speak what was on his mind. Finding himself getting nowhere, he seized a stick and beat her. She took it patiently and afterward stood up and looked him in the face. The chief turned sharply and strode away.

Within a few days he came back on quite a different errand. He had apparently realized what strength and courage this woman had and that he was foolish to disclaim her. This time he led her to his own lodge and installed her there again as his wife and favorite. But nature refused them any more children. Though the chief pretended not to see the baby at all, he raised no objections to his presence.

The boy, slow in getting to his feet, was not slow to pick up words he was constantly hearing. The women of the tent often laughed at the way he said "*Mis-kate my-a-ton* (Bad leg, bad leg)." It gave them opportunity for sneers and taunts, which they

knew cut the unhappy mother deeply. The bitterest, perhaps, was when the glib little fellow followed his grandmother in saying, "*Na-maw ca-qui me-washin!*" The bright innocence of the little fellow made it harder for the mother to bear, and she hesitated to make him understand what the cruel words really meant. Meanwhile she bent herself harder than ever to help the boy grow strong. She had her father make bows and arrows for him and teach him how to shoot. The boy was quick to learn, and his long arms soon displayed power, while his alert mind lost no lesson in skill and precision.

The next year, when he was able to grasp more fully the meanings of words and to understand what manner of sayings had been giving pleasure to the women of his father's lodge, the knowledge almost made him dumb. He held his young head high with pride and scorned to open his lips in their presence, except for the briefest of syllables. The iron that had entered into his mother's soul now entered into his. At five years of age he met his grandmother's stern looks with a steady, withering scorn.

The father was far from displeased at the signs of high spirit that he saw in the boy, but he would not recognize his presence or his own relationship to him.

"What is it you call me, mother?" asked the boy one day when he and his mother were alone.

“Why,” she stammered, unprepared for this change of her little crumpled baby into a sharp-eyed, inquiring lad, “you are my Awasis, my little one.” He was now twelve years old.

“That’s no name for a boy,” he said scornfully. “I want a real name.”

“My dear son,” said the mother, overwhelmed, “must I then reveal the truth? It is that you were so weak and sickly when you were born that I never thought you could live to want a name.”

“But thanks to you, my mother,” he said with a pride and gladness that thrilled her, “I live. And I shall live, and I shall surprise them all yet—see if I do not. You will be glad, and so will the others. But how now do I get a name for myself?”

“For his totem,” said the mother, “a boy goes out alone into the night, and sometimes remains into the next day. But for you there is time enough. Stay by my side and you shall learn about it from your grandfather.”

“No,” said the boy eagerly, “I will learn now, and I will learn from you.”

The mother then wisely taught him. His hour, she saw, had come. Even though he was young, younger than might be good for such thoughts, still he faced them, and so must she. The tide of life was rising in his young soul.

His mother was careful to save the boy from undue resentment toward his father and his tardiness in recognizing him; but careful as she was, he felt the iron in his soul, and stared down at his deformed limb.

"It is not so bad," declared his mother proudly. "There is not much that the other boys can do that you cannot. You can run and shoot arrows with the best of them. You are not afraid of water as some are. All may come out well for you."

The boy's eyes flashed back to his mother's. They had a depth that surprised her, and she wondered what he really thought, for now he trusted himself to say so little.

"My name, my totem, that is what I shall get now," he said.

"But not tonight," said his mother apprehensively, looking at the threatening clouds.

"Yes, tonight," he answered her.

"But a great storm is coming," she protested.

"What is a storm to you and me?" he asked. "Did you not tell me of the storm through which you carried me when I was born?"

"So be it," she said, acquiescing. "After that storm came rest and peace and restoration for me. May it be that way now for you."

That night the boy, equipped in the best garments

his mother could provide him, slipped out of the tent and plunged into the darkness, left the lodges and wandered out onto the prairie. The storm broke and deluged him but he toiled onward, holding his face to the torrents and saying, "Rain, you are my brother, like river water and the dew. I do not fear you. You are my friend and guide."

The storm passed. The thunder was low, but there was sharp lightning as the storm clouds rolled. Wet and weary, the boy climbed into a tree. He had a thong and tied himself to the tree, lest in his dreaming he should fall asleep and tumble to the ground. He was observant of all about him, of sounds as well as sights; but most of all of the shafts of lightning that played upon the edges of the departing clouds.

The next shafts of light that he saw were dazzling sunbeams. He rubbed his eyes and could hardly believe it was the sun that shone in glory over his head. The bright sunshine had caught and repeated the vision that had been presented by the lightning of the storm. Now he unslung his bow and arrows and stood like a statue for several minutes at the root of the tree. He did not watch in vain. A great gray hare that had not entirely changed its winter's coat and had fed well on the sweet young grasses bounded by. The boy's arrow unerringly caught the animal under the ear and it dropped in its tracks. The young hunter

replaced his arrow in his quiver and returned to his home.

With shining eyes he presented the hare to his mother. She made and served a savory stew of it and then asked for his story. There were other women present in the lodge, while at the opposite side sat the chief with some of his councilors. "We will not look that way," said the chief to his companions; "nevertheless we shall hear what the lad says."

After telling of his journey and his conversation with his brother the rain, the boy said that while he was in the tree he had seen a bright arrow fly by. At first it was supported by another and smaller arrow, though it went speeding on faster than the smaller one. There was still another arrow trying to support it, but the big arrow went on so fast that it, too, was almost lost in the darkness.

"Then in the sunshine," the boy said with glowing eyes, "I saw the same thing again, only I was able to make out faces in the heads of the arrows. Mother, the one supporting the big arrow had your face. The one on the arrow behind, trying to give it a push, had the face of the chief. The third arrow had on it my own countenance. Therefore my name and totem is to be At-toos Nish-to (which is to say, Three Arrows)."

II

THE NIGHT OF THE STORM

THE chief his father and the chief's councilors had listened with interest to the words of Three Arrows.

"He should have named himself Rain-in-the-face," said one member of the tribe. "He braved the storm and called the rain his brother, taking it with courage. He is a courageous, strong-minded little fellow."

These words pleased the father greatly.

"He calls himself Three Arrows, but says that his own arrow was biggest, strongest and fastest," declared another member. "He says that his mother's arrow supported him at the start, although his own was soon able to sail without that assistance; but that his father's arrow came on in the dark and hardly touched him, therefore his successful flight was not due to his father at all."

The men looked cautiously at the chief, and several of them laughed. One of their number took a keen look at the boy and missed nothing; the head which was held so high and proudly, the shining

eyes, and the fact that the boy stood on his perfect leg, the other hanging easily beside him, resting on the ball of the great toe.

"He should have been called Short-leg," said this man, "for by that name he will be known amongst his fellows. It is his most distinguishing mark."

The chief's eyes flashed anger. He had noticed how the boy had determined to overcome his handicap, even to forget it. "If any man calls him that," he said, "or reminds him of his leg, I shall kill that man. Remember, all of you!"

So the chief's support of his son at last appeared, but it was a support given only in the dark. He never openly recognized the boy, and though Three Arrows now had name and totem, he refused to have the fact proclaimed in the council tent. Still the story of the boy's night venture was told through the camp, and the chief's words about any reference to the deformed leg placed a sharp check upon malicious tongues.

His new name of Three Arrows now called upon the boy to make it one of honor in the camp. He would take his place amongst the men, yes, amongst the very best of the men. These he sought out in the camp, and whatever they did he undertook to do. He learned to make bows, big bows, and the most beautiful arrows, strong and well pointed with flint, bone

or iron; and he practised assiduously at shooting with them. His long arms favored him and became wonderfully strong. In the archery contests he soon surpassed his fellows, both in speed of shooting and in distance and driving power tests. He was soon drawing the bow of a full-grown man.

Clever and strong with his arms, he yet was not satisfied to lag behind on his feet. He raced with the boys of the camp. He asked no favors, but if any boy pitied him, or in any way made mention of his infirmity, Three Arrows promptly thrashed him. His fellows soon learned to fear those powerful, quick and clever fists.

The mother of Three Arrows took the keenest delight in the manner in which her son went out and took his place amongst his fellows. She remained sorrowful that the chief had not recognized his son, but she shared the hope of the boy that he would yet make the council recognize him, and without the chief's assistance or patronage. Meanwhile she did not relax one whit in giving her son all the help she could command. She made the best of garments for him, for he was an ardent and successful hunter, and she cooked lovingly and well the food that he secured. She persisted in massaging his skin with oil and bear's grease and she had taught both him and herself to swim. Many an hour they swam in the

river, defying the power of its current. Three Arrows in this way had an accomplishment that few Indian boys attain. Though Indians are the best of canoe-men and boatmen, they do not often love actual contact with water; they are perhaps the world's poorest swimmers. But Three Arrows had learned to make the river, like the rain, his brother.

But the mother was not altogether reconciled to the boy's condition, and the old grandmother still looked upon her and on her boy with scorn. All his mother's care and all his exercising did not seem to bring him growth. There were many boys only ten summers old who were taller than he was at twelve. His head did not seem to reach very far above that of the big dogs of the camp. In fact, one day a big dog disputed his power, and this aroused the boy's attention. He was not going to stand in fear of dogs or of any other thing about him. He took a stout club and went through the camp, encountering dog after dog and challenging each one. If the dog came and went as he ordered, he was satisfied; but if it showed fight, he fought it there and then until he made that dog do as he ordered. In this way he kept up his campaign until he knew every dog in the encampment and every dog knew him, and by that time he was an expert in handling dogs.

These adventures brought Three Arrows into close

contact with the best dog-drivers. He spent much time in the winter with them, helping them train young dogs and call out the speed of the best. One man gave him two pups and he secured two more from two other men. In this way he obtained possession of a team of dogs. With some buffalo bull leather and the aid of his mother he made a stout set of dog harness. With his mother's help and that of his grandfather, he also made a serviceable sled. He trained his dogs carefully, and was a proud boy when he was able to take his mother for a long ride.

The mother of Three Arrows was quick to see advantage in this. She induced the boy to take her on a journey to a winter camp and secure furs. So, after packing the dog-sled, Three Arrows and his mother rode for many days north from the big camp and found a place where foxes and other fur-bearing animals abounded. Here they made a little camp and set out a long string of snares and traps and dead-falls. Rabbits and partridges and prairie chickens were plentiful, and in a water-hole in a pretty lake near by they set a net, so that they had food in abundance. In this way the boy and his mother, who herself was an expert hunter, spent a very happy month. In their dead-falls they caught three wolves and one wolverine. In the smaller traps and snares they caught mink and marten, ermine and rabbits and

foxes. They snared so many rabbits that the industrious mother made a most beautiful and comfortable rabbit-skin blanket for her son, under which he said he could defy the coldest night earth could boast. The other furs were carefully dressed. Then, with a big sled-load, the boy and his mother went back to their band.

"How did you secure all these furs?" asked the chief as he welcomed his wife.

"Three Arrows got them," she answered. "He intends to buy a gun and more traps."

The chief turned away and went out of the wigwam without even looking at the boy who was standing proudly by his mother. The mother was more hurt and disappointed than the boy. She thought that the chief should at least have recognized his prowess as a hunter and spoken a word of commendation. But the boy did not stop to consider whether or not his father commended him. He had enjoyed the hunt, and now he wanted to enjoy the fruits of the hunt. He wanted his mother to get ready and go with him to some trader and buy the gun and something for herself as well.

But the next morning when Three Arrows awakened, all his furs had disappeared. Grief-stricken, he appealed to his mother.

"The chief has them," she said, trying hard to

control her voice and disappointment. She loved her boy, and still she wished to be loyal to her husband and chief. "He says you are too young to have a gun. Only a few of the best braves here have guns. When you ride a horse it will be time enough, he says, for you to have a gun."

"But the furs were ours, not his," said Three Arrows.

"He is the chief," was all the mother could trust herself to say.

Disappointment and anger were struggling to manifest themselves in the boy.

"They belong now to the tribe," his mother went on, "but perhaps the chief will give us back a part of them when we meet the traders."

"And if he does not, what good do we get out of them?" he demanded.

"Little," she answered with a bright smile, "except the pleasure we had in getting them."

He caught her spirit and determined to face the situation bravely and cheerfully.

"But I wanted to get you a new shawl and a blanket," he declared.

"And I wanted you to get a gun and be a brave," she made reply.

"Those things will happen yet," said Three Arrows, and picking up his great bow and quiver of

arrows and taking his snowshoes along, he went out. He did not call his dogs. He wanted to be alone and think. He and his mother had toiled hard and long, and they had secured many fine furs, and now in a night they had all been taken from him and no return made! Three Arrows could not understand it, nor the fact that his mother seemed to accept the situation and to think that there was nothing very wrong about it. The man who had done this was the chief, and they themselves belonged to the tribe. So the boy began to perceive that he was only one of a group, and that in some way neither he nor what was his was absolutely his own. Three Arrows had fought his battles so much alone, or with only the help of his mother, that he had come to think only of himself, and that his victory or failure was his alone. Now it seemed to be otherwise.

He swung along the snow on his snowshoes. His pace had quickened with his thinking. He was beyond the camp now, out amongst the hills that were to the westward. The great snows that had fallen in February had been rolled along by the wild west March winds until they had filled every gully and crevice. The drifts were deep and reached far. Over this windswept snow Three Arrows hastened along. It was sheer physical delight to him. He gloried in his strength and in the speed with which he could run.

Then a dark object, out towards the prairie, attracted his eye. He ran lightly on his shoes and discovered a huge buffalo bull pawing the snow. Three Arrows took a wide circle around the animal, in order to come up on the prairie side and drive him into the deep snow so that he might get close enough to direct an arrow at him. In doing this he discovered two other buffalo. He shouted and flung his arms at them and succeeded in driving them towards the hills and into the deep drifts. The big animals plunged and ploughed through the snow, tossed their heads and wallowed in the drifts. Three Arrows ran swiftly after them. The buffalo struggled along desperately, but they could not get away from the boy who ran so lightly over the snow.

Three Arrows now pulled his bow to full power at the big buffalo bull's side and let drive. The arrow went almost through him and he dropped. Quickly pulling another arrow from his quiver, the boy ran to the second buffalo, which turned as though he would charge and fight him. But Three Arrows only smiled, and taking careful aim sent his arrow in between the second and third ribs. The buffalo stumbled, struggled to regain his feet, flung his head high, and with a great snort sank into the snow. Three Arrows then ran towards the third buffalo.

Seeing his brothers fall, this animal had turned his

face to the plains and had tried to get out of the drifts, and was making good progress when Three Arrows started after him. The boy swerved to the south in an endeavor to turn him back, and he ran straight west. The buffalo did not heed or see into what he ran, and came upon an icy stretch. This was fatal to him. He slipped and fell, and Three Arrows closed in on him. The animal regained his feet and was about to gallop away when an arrow deeply pierced his flank and again he had fallen. Again he regained his feet, but Three Arrows was beside him with another arrow, and he fell over with a thud that shook the frozen ground.

The young hunter danced a dance of triumph around the buffalo he had killed. Then with his hunting-knife he cut out the tongues, as was the custom, and hastened back to camp. He gave the tongues to his mother, and sent word to the chief that if there were any hungry people in the camp, they might go out and get for themselves all the meat they wanted, for he had killed three large buffalo just beyond the hills to the west.

The camp had been short of meat for some time and this was welcome news. But the fact that the boy had killed three buffalo alone, and with just four arrows, did not escape the men who went out and brought in the carcasses, and Three Arrows was the

hero of the camp. But as he was still not recognized by his father, no word of praise reached the boy's ears. That, however, did not prevent him and his mother from rejoicing over his performance, nor did it prevent him from having a sense of power at being able to inform the chief that he might now find meat to feed his people. In spite of the father, and even in spite of the tribe, the boy was growing into the stature of a man.

III

THE WINNING OF WHIRLWIND

THAT spring Three Arrows determined to have a horse of his own. He soon learned that he need not look to the chief for one, and his mother's father was too poor. "Catch one for yourself," said the grandfather.

This awakened Three Arrows to the fact that there were horses roving the plains, and that clever men could catch and train them. He talked the matter over with his grandfather, secured horsehair, and made lariats and lassos. He practised upon the dogs, lassoed them and fought each one to a standstill. If men interfered, he threatened to fight them too; and they, remembering the manner in which he had met those buffalo in the hills, thought it as well to leave him alone. The chief would neither support the boy nor curb him. The only limit put upon him was that he was not to touch a horse or a gun that belonged to the camp. This lassoing of dogs, pulling them about and being pulled by them, was having a noticeable effect upon the boy's physique. He had taken a sudden notion to grow and was shooting up

to be a tall stripling. At fourteen he was rapidly attaining manhood's height.

The tribe had located a band of wild horses, and the chase was on. Three Arrows, not having the use of a horse, had to take his lassos and do what he could by stalking. When other hunters were riding over the plains, he could hope for little opportunity to make a catch while afoot. So instead he studied the habits of the wild horses as well as he could, and tried to find out their haunts at night, hoping to come upon them some morning and capture one unawares. But this method did not bring results. Then he noted where their favorite watering places were. Finally he discovered that they sought out certain salt licks, places in the ground where the salt cropped out. Here he waited patiently one day, still as a pine tree, and with everything in readiness for action if the opportunity should appear.

As he waited he saw one of the prettiest sights he had ever beheld—wild horses and colts at play. The day was bright and no danger was evident to them. Although they were on their way to the salt lick they were in no haste to reach it, and they continually played around each other, some nipping, others sham-fighting, their coats shining like satin in the summer sun.

One big roan attracted the attention of Three Ar-

rows. The horse was careering here and there, coming gradually nearer to the tree by which the boy had taken his stand, and Three Arrows determined to secure him. Nearer and nearer came the whole band, and Three Arrows might have caught one of the younger and less suspicious horses, but he had his eye fixed upon the roan. At last the big horse came prancing toward him, and quick as a flash Three Arrows flung up his lasso so that it fell squarely upon the neck. The roan plunged and tried to throw it off, then started to run out on the plains. Three Arrows dug his heels into the ground to stop him, but the animal was too strong. Three Arrows jerked on the line and threw his full weight upon it, but he was too light to stay the horse. Nevertheless he would not let go, and the fighting, galloping roan soon had him off his feet. The boy was dragged cruelly over the ground, and still he would not release his hold. His life itself, perhaps, was saved by the lasso's breaking.

Wounded and badly bruised, Three Arrows struggled to his feet and saw the big roan, head high and tail waving, dragging the loosened lasso with its broken trailing end, circling around to meet again the other horses. Three Arrows had no more desire for attack that day. With the broken lasso he returned to his mother's tent, his whole body sore and bruised.

Within a week he had recovered, and during that time he had found more horsehair and mended his lasso. Now he again hunted up the wild horses.

This time he determined to throw his lasso on a horse that he could hold. So he studied the horses in the band. There were several half-grown ones, yearlings, that showed promise of becoming fine horses. A fine dark brown one with well-shaped limbs, quick and saucy of head and delightfully free in action as it ran and trotted over the plains, won his admiration, and he determined to secure this colt. It was a long time, however, before the colt came near enough. Several other horses tantalized him by coming within his range, but they did not appeal to Three Arrows and he waited.

At last his patience was rewarded. The brown colt played nearer and nearer. The moment arrived when Three Arrows faced her squarely and before she could turn and fly, the boy's lasso was over her head. Then the battle for mastery began. The colt reared and plunged. The boy held the lasso with a masterly grip. The colt was strong, but the boy kept his feet. He let her fight away; she was tightening the lasso around her own neck at every pull. Finally, after a desperate effort to release herself, the colt fell to the prairie. But she was up again almost instantly, only again to fall. She got to her feet a second time, and

after a briefer struggle fell once more. Three Arrows had won the fight.

The boy kept a tight line but came up quickly. He tied the colt's front feet close together, and slipped a lariat over the lower jaw. The lasso around the neck being loosened, the startled colt gasped, opened her eyes, and again struggled hopefully to rise.

The boy laughed, and spoke to the horse that now was his. "You fight like a whirlwind, you little vixen," he said admiringly, "but don't hurt yourself. You will find a good friend in me, and I am seeking one in you. Be good now and learn your lesson."

But Whirlwind showed no more desire to learn the lesson than a boy would show under similar circumstances. She fought Three Arrows with teeth and heels, spinning on her front feet like a true whirlwind and lashing out with her hind feet. Three Arrows kept out of reach of those flying feet, and coaxed and sang, "It's the fighter that makes the true friend, little Whirlwind. Fight away. The longer you can fight, the better you will serve. Fight away. Step by step I will teach you, and step by step you will learn. You are to be my sister, little Whirlwind. Over the plains we shall speed together. No one will hinder—it will be woe to them that try! You will never know a better friend."

Thus Three Arrows coaxed and sang, and still the

colt fought for freedom, lashing the air with her hind feet. Every time Three Arrows attempted to pull in the lariat and come nearer, her eyes would blaze with fear and anger and she would show her teeth. Three Arrows was calm and patient. He had plenty of strength to handle this colt, and he was not going to spoil everything by hastening matters. So he held the lariat tightly and talked soothingly, then, as the colt grew weary, took up the lariat length by length, sometimes foot by foot but more often only by inches. Still he was gaining, and the colt was permitting him to approach her. At last he was so near that he could put his hand on her head. Now he played with her ears, patted her neck, slipped his hand over her back and stroked her front legs, never ceasing his soft talk. Then like a flash he cut the thong that bound her front feet together and leaped upon her back.

The colt sprang into the air, but Three Arrows clung like a leech. A moment before, the colt had appeared too exhausted for further exertion, but now new life seemed to have come into her. After jumping and twisting and trying to throw off the strange encumbrance, the colt bolted and ran as if for life across the plains. This was just what Three Arrows desired. Indeed when the colt showed signs of reducing speed, he used his whip. In this way they rode

the plains, far into the night. Then both of them—tired colt and equally tired boy—slept under the trees in a coulee close to a spring of most refreshing water.

The next morning the battle was fought over again, with the boy once more the victor. And it went on, day after day until the colt had learned that she had a master and that the master wished to become her friend. Thus the lessons in service and friendship began; and the captured horse, her wild fears calmed, eventually learned to do what was expected of her.

Not only did Whirlwind come at the pull of the lariat, she learned the calls of Three Arrows, and these she heeded quickly. He would fasten her with a stake and then call her, and she would work and pull at the stake until she had loosened it and then come joyously. It was thus that Three Arrows taught her that she was to come to his side when he wanted her. He also drilled her for speed, constantly racing the other horses. Early and late Three Arrows was with his colt. Whirlwind came to know her master as she knew her own mane. He seemed to be a part of her, and the day that he did not visit her was a day when she would whinny and call for him.

Both the boy and the colt seemed to regret the coming of winter, when the horses of the band were sent away to do for themselves. It seems a cruel

thing to turn a band of horses loose, even in the most sheltered portion of the prairies, and leave them to meet the elements as best they can, pawing out their food from under the snow, eating the snow to slake their thirst when they can find no living spring. But such has been the custom of Indians on the plains, and such is still the custom of many white farmers and ranchers. How the horse, an animal not born to this climate and usage, stands it, is a marvel to many. But he does, and Whirlwind survived and kept strong with the other horses. As soon as spring came she and her master were together again, and Three Arrows saw that she lost nothing of what he had taught her.

That summer Three Arrows was not satisfied with racing Whirlwind with the boys around the camp. He tried her with the buffalo runners, and even followed some buffalo himself. He practised shooting from his seat on the colt's back. He watched the warriors train their own horses, and every trick he saw he practised until he could repeat it, teaching Whirlwind to take her part in the performance. By the end of the season Three Arrows was taking his place in the big buffalo runs.

The strength and grace and speed of Whirlwind were steadily developing. Three Arrows carefully heeded all that he heard about horse-training, and

observed intelligently what the buffalo runners and warriors did to their horses. He was as determined that Whirlwind should not miss anything in the way of instruction and training as he was that he himself should have practice in the ways of becoming a man.

When Three Arrows was eighteen years old and Whirlwind was five, there was no one in that Cree camp, not even the chief himself, who could handle a horse better than could Three Arrows. The boy's early prowess on foot with bow and arrow was now equaled by his work on horseback, and the perfect training of Whirlwind gave her rider every support. Both buffalo hunting parties and war parties now claimed the presence of Three Arrows and Whirlwind, and they always acquitted themselves with honor. But this very efficiency brought them into trouble.

Several bands of friendly Indians had gathered around a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company. Chief Two Horses, Three Arrows' father, wanted guns and ammunition to make a raid upon his enemies. He knew that it would be folly for him to go against them unless he was adequately equipped, but he had little that the white trader would accept in exchange for weapons. His people were plainsmen and spent little time in hunting furs. As long as they found plenty of buffalo, they had what food and

leather they required; they were not going to the trouble of preparing pemmican or collecting buffalo hides. The band which had merely many warriors had not a great deal of "riches," in the white man's conception of things.

At the trading fort the English trader, an old sportsman, wished to see some good racing contests and exhibitions of Indian horsemanship, and offered handsome prizes. For these there were many contestants. Having won the prize for speed, Three Arrows kept Whirlwind out of the other contests; but when an inter-band contest of buffalo running and killing was staged and champions called for, Three Arrows and Whirlwind were chosen to represent their band. It was a popular acclaim. The chief had not had time to make his personal selection when the members of the band called for Three Arrows, and the chief held his peace and let the boy respond. Nothing serious would be lost to the band if the contest was not won. Still, he would like to see it established that his band had the best buffalo runner, horse and man, on the plains.

In this contest the runner had to charge into a herd of buffalo with twelve arrows in his quiver, seeing how many animals he could kill in the shortest time, the straightest course, and the shortest run. The trader and his party and scores of warriors and

hunters on well-trained horses moved out on the plains to see the contest. A party of buffalo runners had rounded up a herd of buffalo and driven them in. The five selected champions took their station near the trader. When all was in readiness the contestants drew lots for position. Three Arrows had fourth place. To the first man the trader handed twelve arrows, all beautifully made, steel pointed and as like as pins. Only these arrows could be used in the contest; any man who shot a different arrow would be ruled out. As soon as the first man came back, the trader handed twelve similar arrows to the second competitor, and he likewise raced away. Thus the contest went on.

When Three Arrows had received his quiverful of arrows, Whirlwind bounded away. The buffalo were getting restless at the attacks upon them and were moving steadily southward, but Whirlwind was not to be denied and was soon beside a big one. A single arrow from the bow and the buffalo rolled over on the prairie. Whirlwind sped on and was soon beside another buffalo, edging him eastward. Three Arrows shot him also and he fell. Inside of twenty-five minutes horse and rider were back beside the trader. In almost a straight line, within half a mile, Three Arrows had killed eleven buffalo with his twelve arrows. In almost every case the arrow had

found the buffalo's heart. The arrow that had missed had struck a rib and glanced, thus necessitating a second arrow.

The kills were all carefully inspected. The best of the other runners had killed only six buffalo. None of them had held the buffalo in so straight a line or made their kills within so short a distance. As the old runners inspected the buffalo that Three Arrows had killed, they marveled at his skill and also at the cleverness of the horse.

Three Arrows was heartily praised, and acclaimed the winner of the contest. In presenting the prize to him the trader said that he would like to purchase his horse. Misunderstanding him and believing that the trader meant that the horse was to be taken in exchange for the prize, Three Arrows quickly handed back the prize, jumped on his horse and rode away.

But the chief understood the meaning of the trader's words and was quick to seize his opportunity—he could now secure the guns that he wanted. He asked the trader what he would give for the horse, declaring that it belonged to himself. They talked and bargained for some time, for the trader wished the chief to accept something else besides guns and ammunition. But the chief was obdurate: it was guns or no horse. So the bargain was struck for ten guns, ball and powder.

Three Arrows could hardly believe it when he was told that his horse had been sold to the trader by the chief. He would have leaped upon Whirlwind's back and ridden away if the chief had not forestalled such a move and had his warriors surround the horse.

"This horse is to be delivered to the trader," announced one of the warriors to Three Arrows. The boy looked at the man as though he had not heard him, and then his eyes caught those of the other men around him. He saw that it was only too true. The men seemed to sympathize with him, but the chief was the chief; his word was law.

As the first man reached out his hand to take hold of Whirlwind's lariat, the hand of Three Arrows sought his quiver for an arrow.

"You do that," said the warrior behind him, one of the chief's closest companions and a man who carried a gun, "and away goes—" he pointed his cocked gun not at Three Arrows but at Whirlwind.

Three Arrows found the blood beating in his head, and he could not think. His heart seemed to be in his throat and his tongue felt glued to the roof of his mouth. He threw his arms in a passionate embrace around Whirlwind's neck and clung there. For a moment no man seemed ready to separate them.

"You are a man and a warrior," spoke the man with the gun, "and the chief's word must be law.

Control yourself. We deliver this horse at once."

Three Arrows did not heed him, or seemed not to. He burst into talk to the horse, reminding her of the happy days, months, years, they had had together, and bidding her not to lose heart when he did not answer her call. "I will never rest," he declared, "until we are together again."

Then they pulled the boy aside, and the warrior with the gun led the horse away through the gate of the fort.

IV

WHIRLWIND RETAKEN

WHEN Three Arrows saw the fort gate close on Whirlwind, he turned and hastened to his mother's tent. He found his bows and arrows, his knives and hatchet and axe, and rolled them in his blanket and was leaving in the dusk when he met his mother.

"My son, where are you going?" she asked apprehensively, for in spite of his stoical nature the boy was sobbing with emotion.

"The chief has sold my Whirlwind for some guns. I am going to get her back," he answered and was gone.

Shortly afterwards the chief came into the tent. "Give the boy this gun," he said graciously, apparently pleased with himself and the world.

The boy's mother took the gun, and, being strong and able, bent it over her knee. Then she handed it back to the chief. "A fine bargain," she said scornfully, "to sell the best horse and the best boy on the plains for a few guns that a woman can bend!" The chief turned quickly from her and went out of the tent.

Three Arrows made a nest for himself under the hill that fell away from the fort on the west side. Here he deposited his blanket and arms. He then crawled out and carefully circled the fort. The walls were high and the gates tightly closed. There was no chance for him to get in, and the one consolation to him was the thought that there was therefore no chance for anyone to get Whirlwind out. However, he watched the fort all night. He was also very observant of the gate the next day, and watched all who went in or came out. But he caught no glimpse of his horse.

One by one the bands of Indians struck their tents and went away. One little group were feasting on boiled buffalo meat, and seeing the lonely boy, they invited him to join them. Not having eaten for a whole day, Three Arrows gladly accepted the offer. He ate ravenously except when he noticed that he was watched.

The next day a large boat, pointed at both ends, came down the Saskatchewan River. It had many bundles of furs and took on more. Three Arrows offered to help load the furs from the fort but was told that his help was not needed just then. On the following day, however, he was told that his help would be acceptable if he would cut wood for the kitchen fires. It was a menial task for him, but it per-

mitted him to enter the fort where his Whirlwind was; so he gladly accepted the job and went to work. He cut the wood required, but he also examined everything that he could and entered every entrance that looked like a door that might possibly hide his beloved horse. He found the stable and saw several fine horses, but Whirlwind was not to be seen.

That night he hid in the stable, and in the first flush of light examined every part of it and saw every horse in the fort, but no Whirlwind was to be found. She must have been stolen by one of the visiting bands of Indians, and yet he was sure that he had seen every horse that had come and gone.

Without reporting himself to anyone, as soon as a gate was opened he slipped out, secured his blanket and arms, and took up the trail of one of the bands.

The Indians were journeying leisurely homeward, and Three Arrows soon caught up to the first band. He saw all their horses, but Whirlwind was not among them. In the night he stole one of their horses, fastened his blanket and arms on it, and rode away. Now he took up the trail of another band and inspected their horses also. He was discovered and the warriors chased him. He made good his escape amid flying bullets, but almost winded his horse, and received a flesh wound in his shoulder.

On visiting the third encampment he left his horse

and took another which he considered better; in fact, it was the one that had been Whirlwind's rival in the recent races. To deceive any Indians who might follow him and attempt to get his mount away from him, he rode directly for a stream and through its course for a long way. Then he took up the trail of another band. He approached this band with great care, and again found no sign of Whirlwind. His presence was discovered this time by the camp dogs, and the warriors got quickly to their horses and came charging after him. They were so persistent and determined to cut off his retreat that Three Arrows unslung his bow and prepared to do battle for his life. He knew how to shoot over his horse's shoulder, and in an emergency to shoot backward. This was such an occasion. Several arrows came speeding after him but fell short. He did not like the close proximity of the first man, so he took aim and shot. The arrow hit the horse in the shoulder and it went stumbling to the ground, flinging the rider over its head. With a yell the other Indians raced after Three Arrows, who fitted another arrow into his bow and treated the advance runner in the same way. When his horse fell, the other warriors swerved aside and Three Arrows was permitted to depart in peace.

He had now visited all the Indian bands that had been at the fort when Whirlwind had won her race,

and he had not noted any stragglers from any other bands. Now he wandered back to the fort, hoping against hope that he might see his horse there, but the gate by which she had entered seemed to refuse to let her come out. He was completely puzzled to know which way to look now, and he might never have known, if he had not seen another of those big boats of the traders conveying a horse in the center of it. Three Arrows jumped to the conclusion that in the boat he had seen arrive but had failed to see depart, his precious Whirlwind had been carried away.

He trailed this boat down the river. When he came to Fort Pitt, he found the place in the throes of the greatest excitement. He himself seemed to have the only decent horse about the place. There had been a bitter attack by the Blackfeet; the fort had been ransacked and every gun and bit of ammunition had been taken, as well as every horse. And, the men declared, they had had some very fine horses; several like the one in the boat just arrived, that were due for the races and contests being arranged at Fort Garry.

Three Arrows made a few careful inquiries. He found that the Blackfeet had been annoyed by murderous Cree attacks, and that some of these Cree bands were particularly well equipped with firearms. These raids had roused the Blackfeet to retaliate, and this they had done by attacking the trading forts

that had supplied the Crees with firearms, and also by making a concerted attack upon the horses of the Crees and thus robbing them of the means of locomotion. Three Arrows knew that his father's band had been amongst the disturbers of the peace.

The trail of the Blackfeet was soon found, and Three Arrows followed it day and night. It was a courageous thing for a lone boy to attempt to get a horse from a nation that had rallied its warriors for a set purpose and would be on a footing of war. But Three Arrows was bound to find his horse or die in the attempt. The Blackfeet had a long start, and it was three days before he caught actual sight of them. The most casual observation of their camp would have been enough to strike fear and despair into an enemy band, let alone the heart of one lonely boy. It was an encampment of hundreds of warriors, and the camp was made in the most approved fashion.

Three Arrows dogged the Blackfeet for several days before he could find any way to assure himself that he was near his horse. They seemed to have the most perfect system of scouting, and he could not penetrate their outposts. Once when they camped by a river, he swam up the stream and penetrated for a distance into the camp, but his presence was discovered. In the dusk as he made haste to get back to the river he slipped over the bank and fell in with a

splash. The Indians, doubtless thinking him some water animal, did not continue their pursuit. Upon another occasion he had a hand-to-hand fight with a scout. Before the fellow could give the alarm and call for help, Three Arrows had his throat in his terrible grip. Then he dragged the body to the river to give the impression, if it were found, that the man had been accidentally drowned. But in spite of all his patience and determination, his tricks and his fighting, Three Arrows was getting no nearer the horse corral.

Not satisfied with the network of scouts spread around their camp, the Blackfeet sent bands of warriors on their swiftest horses to scour a wide stretch of plains around. They did this especially thoroughly when they were just south of the country claimed by the tribe to which Three Arrows belonged. On their last sweep the scouting party caught in their net the pony the boy had been riding, immediately recognized it, and knew the tribe from which it came.

"That horse has wandered far," declared one warrior.

"I thought we might have caught something from Two Horses' band" (meaning the tribe just north, that of the father of Three Arrows), said another.

"No, we didn't leave them a decent dog to ride on," laughed a third warrior.

Three Arrows felt that he could consider himself fortunate that his weapons and blanket had not been captured also, but there was nothing really to compensate him for this new and grievous loss of his pony. The Blackfeet were ever on the move, and he would not now be able to follow them. Three Arrows was getting desperate, almost reckless. Never before had he felt so lonely. If he only had his mother to consult with! If he only could know that Whirlwind was in that great camp spread out on the plains before him! He felt that either presence would mean a world of difference.

As he lay on the prairie and peered out through the long grass, the wind began to moan and warm drops of rain splashed in his face. "Oh, brother rain," cried the boy, "are you come to help me? Will it be tonight that I shall thank you again, and through you take new courage?"

The rain steadily increased until it was descending in blinding sheets. No living thing, unless compelled to, would be out in rain like that. Three Arrows laughed and was upon his feet. He cautiously made his way down into the camp and through it to the horses, and in almost a whisper uttered his call to Whirlwind. Promptly he was answered by a low whinny. Now he moved cautiously amidst the rain-beaten, huddled horses. He called again, felt a nose

thrust into his face, and knew that he had again found his beloved Whirlwind. He patted and stroked her, but in the way that meant silence. As he had suspected, she was tightly tethered. With his hunting knife he soon snipped these bands, and she was free again.

Having got Whirlwind, Three Arrows wondered if he might not release some of his father's horses as well. He would try, but he would not risk too much—he was not yet safely away. Quickly he cut the hobbles of all the horses that huddled around Whirlwind, judging them to belong to his band. He made his way far enough to realize that he had a clear road, then he touched Whirlwind in a way that made her whinny. It was a call that the horses of the band understood, and many of them plucked up their ears and followed.

Three Arrows rode swiftly to the place where he had his blanket. He fastened it upon Whirlwind and instantly was upon her back and racing over the prairie, followed by a score of the freed horses. He rode through the night, and the horses all seemed to know that they were headed for home. But they had a long way to go, and Three Arrows knew that the Blackfeet would not let them arrive there without making a desperate effort to catch them.

When the morning light appeared, some of the

horses seemed to lag, but Three Arrows got behind them and with his swinging lariat and voice urged them on. He could have left them to their fate and on Whirlwind sped away to absolute safety, but he wished to return them, or as many as possible, to his band.

As he feared, when noonday was upon them, away on the southern horizon he saw figures that he was sure were Blackfoot warriors. He shouted to the lagging horses, swept up behind them, and drove them forward as well as he could. Then he loosened his bow and got it and his arrows in readiness for battle. But if these warriors had guns, what could he do?

The horses seemed to have renewed their energy, or perhaps they too had seen or heard the Blackfeet. The race went on hour after hour, but steadily the Blackfeet gained. If Three Arrows could only get a message to his people to come out and meet him—to bring out those guns that they had got in exchange for Whirlwind! But it seemed a vain wish. Frantically he swung his lariat and yelled at the horses to go on.

The pace was trying for most of the horses. Whirlwind, however, seemed to toss her head as much as to say, "When are you going to say the word, so that we may really speed away and shake

off those lazy-legs?" The other horses went steadily on up a rise of ground where they would have to make the long last race for the encampment. As he came up to the top of this little hill, *Three Arrows* heard the whizz of an arrow over his head.

"The first Blackfoot over the hilltop will pay for that," thought *Three Arrows*, as he fitted an arrow into his great bow.

Suddenly he was overjoyed by what he saw away north towards the river. The warriors in the camp had been on the alert and had noticed the first horses that had come over the hill. The cry had gone through the camp, and having seized their guns, the men were hastening towards them.

But *Three Arrows* knew that there was a long run yet before the horses would be safe, and he watched for the first Blackfoot to come up over the hilltop. He came speedily, and as speedily fell from his horse with an arrow through his neck. The same thing happened to the second warrior, and a third also was severely wounded; and all the time Whirlwind was speeding down the prairie after the loose-running horses. The Blackfeet hardly halted to consider their fallen comrades. They saw that they still had a chance to get the horses before the Crees could come up, and with a yell they renewed the race.

Arrows were falling all around the boy and his

mount. One hit Whirlwind in the rump, and Three Arrows quickly jerked it out. Two hit his blanket, and one cut his thigh. He sent another shaft back at the oncoming enemy, wounding one warrior and making him turn aside from the chase. The only hope now was to increase the speed of the flying horses. Three Arrows wished especially to get Whirlwind out of the range of the Blackfoot arrows, so, swinging his lariat and yelling with all the power left in his almost exhausted voice, he plunged right amongst the horses. They seemed to understand the demand upon them and bravely responded. Down came the Blackfoot arrows and stuck in the flanks of some of them, but there was no stopping or turning them.

Then there came a burst of firing in front, and bullets spattered over the prairie. The range was short, but the effect was immediate. The Blackfeet broke and circled away. Three riderless horses came straight on, but the others turned to the westward; some, retreating more sharply, went back over the hill, their riders pausing only to pick up the warriors that had fallen. The firing of the Crees, however, continued as long as there was a Blackfoot in sight.

Then the Cree warriors sprang from the ground and rushed to greet Three Arrows. He waved to them to look out for their horses and to capture the

three loose horses of the Blackfeet, but they were more concerned about welcoming him back and in rejoicing again at the sight of Whirlwind. Even the chief came to welcome him, but Three Arrows swept past him to greet his mother. His next act was to secure grease and herbs and carefully anoint Whirlwind's wound.

But the enthusiastic people were not to be denied or put aside. "Call the council," they shouted, and then they sang and chanted:

"Three Arrows has come back and he has brought Whirlwind with him. He is worthy to be proclaimed; yea, he is doubly worthy of honor. He was a hunter of skill and power, he is now a warrior of might and great cunning. He brought food to the camp with his bow, he brought honor to the tribe with his horse Whirlwind. Single-handed he has humbled the proud Blackfeet, and brought home many horses that we had lost. There is none in the tribe like Three Arrows. Hunter and warrior and chief's son, he shall be proclaimed. Woe to any who will say him nay!"

V

THE WHITE TRADER

THREE ARROWS told the happy, shouting people, who were demanding that the council meet at once and proclaim his status and honor, that it did not matter now.

“I am glad you are pleased with the way I have served you,” he said, “and with what I have done. You have some of your horses back—I wish that I could have got them all. But the night was dark and the rain was heavy.”

The people would not listen to such talk and apologies. “You did better than ten warriors; yea, than a hundred,” they answered him. “You will be acclaimed hunter, warrior, chief’s son, and you will be our next chief.”

“That cannot be,” said Three Arrows with dignity, holding up his deformed limb. “A chief must be a physically perfect man. You must not disgrace your tribe by making a chief of a man with a short leg.”

“It was too long for the Blackfeet,” cried an Indian warrior triumphantly, “and it is therefore long

enough for us." The shouts and laughter which greeted this hearty saying showed Three Arrows how the people approved of him.

The people had their way. The council gathered, and there was a great deal of speechmaking. The old orators had many young rivals that day, who vied with them in proclaiming and extolling the virtues and triumphs of Three Arrows and of his wonderful horse Whirlwind, that he had caught, raised and trained. Three Arrows was proclaimed a first-rank warrior of the band, a sub-chief, second only to his father, Two Horses. The chief was happy in the praise and promotion that had come to his son, and he gave a great feast in the young man's honor.

At the feast there was more speechmaking, and the achievements and victories seemed to be greater than ever. The song-makers were busy also, and praises were sung and chanted first by men and then by women, as they all danced around their hero. But to the young man the most important, touching and impressive feature was his father's speech, with its confession and whole-hearted acceptance of him.

Proclaiming the virtues of his son, the chief declared that these had been achieved without the least help, advice or encouragement from himself. The youth's honors were absolutely his own; he had won them by the help and favor of no one. He had

taught and trained himself as he had taught and trained his horse. Any debt that he may have owed to the tribe for life and place he had paid again and again, in food, in honor, and in horses. His victories had been won single-handed.

"I am proud," the chief continued, "to have in our tribe a young man of such courage and spirit and self-mastery; for great deeds and victories are but the fruits of true manhood. Three Arrows has spent his days in keen observation and hard training. The legend about his name has come true. His mother did support his flight for a short time at the beginning, but by his own inherent strength of spirit and body he has sped on his own way. I am glad to proclaim Three Arrows my own true son and heir. Such a man will, ever and always, make this tribe proud of him."

It may have been the iron that had got into the soul of Three Arrows, or some unfulfilled ambition, or a vision of the changes that were coming over the life of the country, or merely some subtle urge of spirit; but he had no thought of accepting passively his part in the life of the tribe. There was a sense of honor that pressed him to immediate action. After the feasting and speechmaking were over he prepared to leave them, and the people demanded his reason.

"I go to return Whirlwind," he said, "to the man to whom the chief has sold her."

"But it was from the Blackfeet that you took her," cried the people.

"Yes," said Three Arrows, "that is true; but she was sold by the chief and by this tribe to the white trader, and back to the white trader she goes."

"No, I will give back my gun first," protested a warrior to whom one of the captured guns had been given. "And so will I," said another. The excitement ran high and penetrated to the uttermost parts of the camp. The tribe was not going to lose Three Arrows and his horse again, whatever the sacrifice demanded. Eight of the captured guns were found and brought before him.

"Keep your horse," said the chief to Three Arrows. "We will make it right with the trader."

"The trader bought Whirlwind for his own purpose," declared Three Arrows, "and she must fulfil the bargain. I shall go with her."

The chief saw that Three Arrows had made up his mind, that he would either go openly or steal away, and so he ceased his opposition. "Take another horse," said he, "and if you cannot buy back Whirlwind, deliver her and come back on the other horse, and come back soon."

"I go with Whirlwind," answered Three Arrows, "and with Whirlwind I shall stay."

The chief thought these words were only a statement of youthful enthusiasm, but some of the Indians thought differently, and his mother knew differently. She went with her son far along his way, and he was slow to say his farewells to her.

"The chief sold Whirlwind," he said again, as though arguing the matter over once more to himself, "and I must take her to the man he sold her to. You yourself obey the chief, mother, and you have taught me to obey him."

"But he did not sell you," said the mother. "And now he wants you by his side."

"I must go with Whirlwind," repeated Three Arrows, as though uttering some ultimatum from his inmost soul. He threw an arm around his mother's neck, whispered something into her ear, held her cheek tightly to his for several moments, and then, releasing her, leaped upon his horse and sped away.

Before he approached the trader's fort, Three Arrows bathed Whirlwind in the river, dried her coat with dry grass, and polished it with his hands. With his fingers he combed her mane and tail and decorated them with long white red-tipped feathers. Then he took a swim, dried his long hair, anointed it

with bear's grease, and rebraided it and decorated it with similar feathers. He covered his body with bear's grease and rubbed it with red paint, and on his feet put a new pair of beautifully decorated moccasins that his mother had given him.

The fort gate was opened for him when he appeared, and through it, resplendent in the sunshine, rode Three Arrows with Whirlwind. Chief trader Rankin was in the yard and beheld them with glad surprise.

"Why, by the god of sport," he exclaimed, "there is my best bet, stolen by the Blackfeet at Fort Pitt! Where did you get her?"

"From the Blackfeet," said Three Arrows.

"From the Blackfeet!" exclaimed the trader.
"You never bought her from them?"

"I went and took her from them," said Three Arrows, "took her and twenty more of my tribe's horses from their camp on a stormy night. The other horses remain with the tribe. I now bring Whirlwind to you."

"I saw you do one wonder, young man," said the trader, almost incredulous, "and so I must believe you capable of doing another. Put your horse away in the stable and feed her, and then come and we will talk this thing over. I am not so sure that that horse isn't more yours than mine."

"But you bought Whirlwind from the chief," said Three Arrows.

"Well, suppose it was his to sell—which I doubt," added the trader, "for he left the prize here, saying that it was yours and the horse also, though he was ready to sell both for guns. As to the horse, I sent her down the river by boat, for I wanted her to take part in the races at Fort Garry—I'm bound to beat those fellows some day. Anyway, the rascally Blackfeet came down on Fort Pitt and stole her and all the other horses about the place, and I lost her, a spoil of war. Now you have, somehow or other, beaten these clever rascals at their own game; and, boy, by all the laws of sport she's yours."

"All this does not alter the fact that you paid the chief a price for her," said Three Arrows; "many guns and much powder. You must have bought her at that great price for some special thing."

"I did, boy, I did," acknowledged the trader. "I bought her to enter the races that are to come off at Fort Garry. I want to beat those big fellows down there, and when I saw your horse I thought she could put up the big argument."

"Send us to do it now," said Three Arrows.

"By jove, boy, but you are one after my own heart!" exclaimed the trader. "If we can make it, we'll get there. We'll have nothing less than sweep-

stakes. Then, my boy, none can deny you. You and your horse will be free as the wind to go where you please."

"I'll come back and get buffalo meat for you and your people here," said Three Arrows. "When I cut your wood I learned that you keep a buffalo runner."

"Nothing would suit me better," said the trader, "and I shall pay you well."

"A blanket and a shawl for my mother?" said Three Arrows.

"Yes," said the trader, "one of each for her every year, and some for a sweetheart, too."

"Then I'm your man," said Three Arrows.

Luck favored the old sporting trader, as it is inclined to do all intelligent and energetic men. A York boat was found and they manned it with ten of the cleverest Cree voyageurs. Three Arrows, Whirlwind and the trader were rushed down the river and across country to Fort Garry. Many horses, the pride of the plains, were there and several races had already taken place. Chief trader Rankin was permitted to enter Whirlwind, and he backed her up with a great stake. Other traders, plainsmen and even Indians rose to his challenge, and excitement ran high.

In the preliminary trials Whirlwind, after her exciting experiences in war camps and, above all, her hasty trip down the Saskatchewan River, did not

reveal any unusual grace or speed; she had not really found her legs. The trader offered several pointers as to the best method of putting her into racing form, and Three Arrows followed these out with the greatest care and persistence.

The day of the great race was sunny, even brilliant. The prairies stretched away in unlimited grandeur, with glistening grasses and multitudes of flowers. Hundreds of horsemen, fur traders, half-breeds, pioneer settlers and Indian bands in their pomp and regalia, were present and made up a very beautiful and animated scene.

The course was marked off and the racing began. There were a few local races and challenges, and these were run off first. Then came the great race of the day. There were over twenty entrants, all dancing, prancing, vivacious horses, as eager as their masters and riders for the race.

In the getaway Whirlwind did not do as well as some of the other horses. Having so many other horses around her had made her somewhat nervous. But Three Arrows remembered what the trader had told him. He encouraged her, favored her in the early period of the race, pushed her in the middle period, and then, as he shook off his competitors, pitted her with the leaders. Whirlwind responded to his generalship and moved steadily forward. Three

horses were still ahead of them and Three Arrows saw that they were magnificent animals. They too were ridden by young Indians, but they had ridden their mounts hard from the very start. Three Arrows closed in behind them and was content with that place until they came within sight of the goal.

"Now, my Whirlwind, now!" whispered Three Arrows, leaning forward on his horse and crouching close to her neck.

Whirlwind responded with a burst of speed. The other horses tried to respond to her challenge but they had exhausted their reserves and could not stand the pace, although their riders lashed them with whips. One horse fell in his tracks, and Whirlwind, true to her name, swept past the others and won by two full lengths.

Horse and rider were loudly cheered upon their victory, and the men crowded around them. Nearly every man wanted to know the price that was wanted for the horse. Many a time Three Arrows wished he were back on the western plains, and several times he leaped on his horse as though he would ride away from these unfeeling, mercenary people who asked such a question. Trader Rankin, knowing the young man's sensitiveness, rode back with him to Fort Garry and had Whirlwind put away in the stables in the fort. He hoped then to take Three Arrows back with

him and have him share the honors of victory, but Three Arrows would not leave the stall that contained his pride. She was not again to be spirited from his side.

Seeing him well cared for and supplied with food, the trader sought his companions. The race had won him much money, and he celebrated by holding a feast that ended in a noisy, drunken carousal. It was a week before, red-faced and talkative, he appeared before Three Arrows and was ready to return to his trading post. He was once more, however, the sharp, shrewd business man. He had secured a large quantity of goods for trading purposes, and these he had packed in carts to be drawn by oxen. Ten days after the race, to the delight of Three Arrows, the homeward trek began.

It was a long, leisurely journey, consuming five weeks; very tiresome to the trader, but full of pleasure for Three Arrows and Whirlwind. They liked to act as guard to the caravan, and then, when meat was needed, to take a spurt out on the plains and shoot a few buffalo. In the first week in September they rode into the fort and were most heartily welcomed, for the news of the sweeping victory had arrived ahead of them.

Trader Rankin now sent word to Chief Two Horses, telling of Whirlwind's victory and inviting

the people to a feast to celebrate the event. After the feast the trader presented each family with a blanket. To his mother Three Arrows was able to give four blankets—two pairs, red with black stripes at the ends—and a large and beautiful shawl of many brilliant colors.

"The fort women will show you how to make one pair of these blankets into a warm dress," Three Arrows whispered to her, "and you need never be cold." He also gave a beautiful shawl to his sister Omeme, and another to her young friend Wanda.

When Chief Two Horses met the trader he told him he wished to buy back Whirlwind. He confessed that he should not have sold the horse in the first place, but that he had been angered against the Blackfeet and wanted guns. The fight had not brought the Crees any credit, only loss of men and horses. The only bright spot in the campaign was the achievement of Three Arrows. And now he wanted to redeem Whirlwind and bring her and Three Arrows back into the tribe.

"My friend," said the trader, looking the chief straight in the eyes, "neither you nor I have the smallest claim upon that horse. She belongs to Three Arrows. She is his a dozen times over. You know what he did before I got her. She has been a spoil of sport and war since that time, and he has won her again and

again. She is his very life, and he has come to think that the safest place for his horse is under his own personal care. He says he is to be my buffalo runner and keep this place supplied with meat, and with that idea you may be sure I am mightily well pleased. You may come and see him if you like, but in any case be sure that his mother is brought to see him at about this time every year."

Chief Two Horses would have had it otherwise, but, just as the legend had it, the boy's arrow was taking its straight course without his help or power. The father would have found it a comfort to have had such a son at his side. He had realized too late the value of the gift which life had given to him, and which he had scorned because of one tiny blight. Now it was to be his no longer. The arrow would pass on into the light, while he would remain in the darkness.

VI

HUNTING THE BUFFALO

DEEPLY disappointed at the decision of Three Arrows, Chief Two Horses and his band returned to their home country. Three Arrows found the life at the fort very congenial. His business of keeping the fort supplied with fresh buffalo meat was a daily delight to him, for he and his beloved Whirlwind took the keenest pleasure in roaming the plains. Then, too, trader Rankin was a kind and appreciative employer. He often took a run with Three Arrows, and his unfeigned admiration of Whirlwind pleased the young Indian, as well as his respect of Three Arrows' ownership of his horse. Mr. Rankin, on his part, found Three Arrows good company and delighted to draw the young man out in conversation. He saw that Three Arrows had been a most observant student of life. Nothing that had happened in his father's tribe seemed to have escaped him. Though he had been a silent and disregarded boy, he had absorbed and meditated upon the words of wisdom he had heard from the headmen as they talked at their camp fires and in the council tents. And now, in the companion-

ship of such a sympathetic employer, he continued to learn much and soon mastered many of the ways of the white man. "I'll make a trader of you one of these days," Mr. Rankin told him smilingly.

While delighted with this manifestation of approval of his progress, Three Arrows kept his own counsel. He was prepared to master all the knowledge that he could, but he was not giving up the freedom of out-of-doors, and he was not going to be long or far away from his horse. During the long winter months, however, when riding on the plains was an impossibility, he took keen delight in mastering many more of the white man's ways. There was a sense of power in knowing these things, and then there was the satisfaction that came from pleasing such a man as Mr. Rankin. The trader not only took pleasure in instructing his pupil, but found his services very useful in trading with the wandering bands of Indians that strayed in during the cold winter months.

For one of the greatest trading seasons with the Indians in that district is just after the winter solstice in December. Each year at the end of the autumn they break up their great bands and scatter, alone or with their immediate families or in very small groups, to their northern hunting grounds. Why they prefer to leave these hunting grounds at the season when fur is at its best and fur-catching so profitable, and take

long trips to the trading posts with the furs they have caught, is a mystery to many. Perhaps by that time they have become tired of their hunting and want a change, for the Indian is a restless man, or perhaps they long for a holiday, as white men do in the summer season. Or, which is more likely, it may be that these Indians, children of the woods and the plains, are sensitive to the turn in nature, to the lengthening of the daylight hours. They feel, perhaps, that they must get out and see something of this new life and have their part in it, so they make their way to the nearest trading post and enjoy such social life as is possible there, knowing that if they bring good furs they will receive a hearty welcome and generous and hospitable treatment.

In dealing with these bands, in feeding and entertaining them, the trader found a most efficient helper in Three Arrows. He was an adept in picking up the different dialects. His memory forgot nothing and no one, while his powers of observation and concentration seemed to devour everything that came before him. Tales of his prowess, his eloquence, his courtesy, his hospitality, passed quickly from hunter's lodge to hunter's lodge. As a result, trader Rankin had bands of Indians coming to him that he had never known or heard of, and as they came they brought with them some of the most beautiful furs

he had ever seen. As he gathered in these precious furs and thought of the good name they would bring him in the reports of his company's business, he again blessed the day on which he had discovered Three Arrows.

So the winter passed, full of pleasure and profit. But these generous entertainments at the fort meant great inroads upon the food supplies, hence Three Arrows looked eagerly for the time when he and Whirlwind could get away to hunt the buffalo. But the snows persisted that spring, and March and April were full of raging storms that seemed to delight in holding blizzard carnivals on the plains.

In desperation Three Arrows organized parties and sent them out with dog-sleds and on snowshoes to hunt for buffalo or moose that might have been wintering in the woods or sheltered valleys. These parties found occasional stray animals, enough to keep the fort people from actual want. But it was a glad day for Three Arrows when the brown earth of the plains appeared and he was permitted to spring on the back of Whirlwind and speed away to find the buffalo in numbers.

That first journey was both a delight and a disappointment to Three Arrows. Although he and Whirlwind were able to get out on the plains for a real run and to gallop for many miles, in all the

distance they covered they did not come upon any buffalo. Why were the herds so slow in coming north that year when they were ~~so~~ much wanted? Finally, after a long ride, Three Arrows discovered two buffalo. They were not to his liking, for they were thin and scrubby looking, having wintered badly; but seeing no others, he herded them toward the fort and shot them when he was within easy call. Though the animals were not prime, the fort people were glad to get the fresh meat.

During the latter part of the winter Mr. Rankin had been urging along his carpenters and boat builders, so that when the ice in the great river broke, his boats, loaded with their cargoes of rich furs, could ride away with the first flood. Five of these river boats were now built. It was a great day when these were launched and loaded, their cargoes carefully covered with stout tarpaulins. Each boat was manned by a choice crew of hardy Indian voyageurs, every one of them decked in new outfits of the gayest colors they could find; blanket coats of red and blue or of white and black bound around their waists by sashes of rainbow colors, and their cloth or buckskin leggings and caps decorated with beads or silk or porcupine-quill work, such as only the love and the skill of Indian women could produce. Mr. Rankin talked of going with this rich shipment, and Three Arrows

feared to the last that he would do so. He wondered what kind of life he himself would then live at the fort, for Mr. Rankin had meant so much to him personally. He was full of rejoicing when he found that the trader had at last decided to stay at his post.

The farewells were said by the voyageurs, and they took their places in the boats. Mr. Rankin looked upon them with longing, anxious eyes. A long, hard and dangerous journey was before them before they would reach Lake Winnipeg. So much seemed to be at stake with regard to his future, or at least so he thought; his very promotion and fortune seemed to be wrapped up in the furs piled snugly away in those boats. At last the command was given, and with a few deft strokes of their long oars the boats swung out into the rushing current of the great Saskatchewan River and shot away at a terrific speed down the stream. After watching them out of sight Mr. Rankin returned to the fort, while Three Arrows sprang upon Whirlwind and rode away over the plains, hunting for buffalo.

If Mr. Rankin had had premonitions of danger, he had not rightly judged where it lay. Certainly the rushing, angry-looking, ice-filled waters of the Saskatchewan were no placid pond upon which to launch one's argosy of furs and hopes. By comparison the wide plains that swept away in silent vastness, their

dazzling white garments of many months rapidly changing to murky brown or slaty green, touched upon the horizons with a hazy blue, seemed to be peace itself. There was nothing apparent in the plains to arouse a sense of fear. Even when he was inside the fort, it was the window that faced the eastern stretch of river at which the trader paused and gazed.

But the Blackfeet had not forgotten the raid by Three Arrows, and the horses that he had retaken from them. All during the winter they had been laying their plans for revenge. The band that had suffered had appealed to other tribes, and the council of the nation had also been interested. They had traced Three Arrows to Mr. Rankin's trading post. The fame of Whirlwind only heightened their desire to regain possession of that wonderful horse. They were also informed of the rich furs that had poured into the fort, especially from the north. Here were riches, real riches in the Indians' estimation, and to gain possession of them was worth a great effort. From their experiences at Fort Benton in the United States, the Blackfeet fully appreciated the value of those furs and the things that they could buy with them.

All that day Three Arrows rode and found no buffalo, and he returned very much chagrined. But he determined that he would be away early the next

morning, and though it were to be the longest day's ride he had ever made, he would make that ride before he would return again without buffalo. So early the next morning, before anyone else was astir in the fort, he led Whirlwind to the fort gate, slipped out, sprang upon her back and galloped away.

When the sun leaped above the horizon that same morning it beheld five hundred well-horsed Indians of the Blackfoot nation make a mad rush for the fort, as they believed sunrise was the hour when the gate would be opened and no one awake to any danger. An Indian servant saw the great band riding as though to a charge, and, fearing trouble, shut the big gate and swung the heavy wooden bars behind it. The Blackfeet rode up and demanded entrance, and this being refused, asked to see the trader. Mr. Rankin, awakened and informed of the presence of the warriors, dressed quickly and went out to meet them. Many of them, impatient, were off their horses ready to scale the stockades, and they would have been over that fence, high as it was, if the trader had not appeared so promptly.

The chief at once declared that the trader must surrender the fort and all that was in it, or they would burn him out and kill all the people. Mr. Rankin saw that he was completely at their mercy. Even if he had had with him all the splendid voy-

ageurs whom he had sent away with his furs, he would not have been able to hold the fort against armed warriors. His chief desire now was to save the lives of his people, especially those entrusted to his care by the departed boatmen. He would save them even from molestation, if he could.

So the trader parleyed with the chief, and at the same time gave commands in English to his people to get the women and children quietly and quickly across the river. A few of the men were to man the blockhouses with some show of force and guns. When he had been assured that the women and children, especially those of the men who had gone in the brigade, were safely away, the trader offered to surrender himself and the fort if the Blackfeet would permit all the fort people to go away unmolested. At first the Blackfoot chief refused to consider anything but complete and immediate surrender; he would have all or burn everything.

"There are good fighters here in the blockhouses," said Mr. Rankin. "They are well armed with guns and ball, and even if you do win, you and many of your best warriors will be killed. You would do better to take me and have this ammunition for yourself, instead of having it shot at you."

The chief talked the matter over with the warriors beside him. They were of the opinion that in

getting the trader and the fort they would get not only all they wanted but everything else besides, so they advised the chief to accept the bloodless surrender.

Mr. Rankin stood by the front gate alone, having ordered all his men to leave. There were a few remaining boats at the fort, old but still seaworthy. These were launched, and the fort people, taking such possessions as they could lay their hands on, sprang on board and went away down the river. When Mr. Rankin was assured that all had gone, he opened the gate and the Blackfeet rushed eagerly in, most of them making for the fort stables. The horses were all run out and claimed by individual members of the tribe, although there seemed to be disputes and threats of trouble over the possession of some of them, the chief himself demanding the one which he thought was Whirlwind. When the horses had been secured and were out on the plains, the stores were raided. All the guns and ammunition that they could find the Indians appropriated, and after that they sought for the furs.

Then came the outbursts of anger. Only a few rusty and marred culls were found. Where had all the fine furs they had heard about gone? The chief appeared before the trader and demanded where the furs were.

"The great spring brigade has already left with them for Lake Winnipeg," said the trader, unable to conceal his satisfaction at the fact, "and they are now many miles down the river."

"Ho!" exclaimed the chief in a threatening manner. "I'll make you pay for this. I was about to take the horses, furs and ammunition and leave you here because you surrendered peacefully, but now I'll take you along as my prisoner, and we'll burn your trading post to the ground."

The chief recalled his men, and Mr. Rankin was placed upon a horse. Fire had sprung from several places, and the big wooden towers at the gate and several portions of the stockade fence were burning brightly as they rode away.

VII

ROUSING THE CREEES

After riding until the sun was at its height, Three Arrows came at last upon a small herd of buffalo. Cutting out half a dozen, he herded them away from the others and drove them towards the fort. He was happy in the thought that he would have some prime meat this time for his beloved friend and the other fort people. But when he came upon a rise of ground that overlooked the fort and saw smoke ascending from the stockades, he forgot the buffalo and dashed on to the fort. There he found that most of the stockades had been burned and one of the near-by sheds; the other buildings, water-logged from the melting snows and recent rains, had escaped with little damage.

Anxiously Three Arrows rode around and then through the place, fearing at every turn that he would come upon some dead body; but no one, dead or alive, was to be seen. Then he feared that all the people had been carried away by the raiders, whoever they might be. Carefully he went over the ground, noting all the marks made by the raiders.

There were plenty of tracks in the soft ground, and he shrewdly estimated the number who had made the attack. After his first fears had been allayed, his thought was, "I must hasten to rescue the trader and his people." But when he realized the number of the enemy he was dismayed. What could he, one lone man, do against so many well-horsed and doubtless well-armed warriors?

It was unusual for Three Arrows to sit for such a long time quietly upon his horse. But he was deep in thought; in fact, he had come to a crisis in his thinking. Before this time he had believed that all that was necessary for him to do in order to win his way in the world and attain his ambitions was to absorb all the knowledge that came his way and, turning this knowledge into power, make an efficient man of himself. Thus he would be warrior, hunter, orator, councilor, as occasion demanded; then, with a good horse under him, he would be a master-man. Now, however, he realized that good shot and hunter, guide and buffalo runner as he was, yes, mighty warrior and skilled in many ways of the clever white man, he was helpless when faced by numbers. Numbers can only be conquered by numbers. He must have his band, his tribe; yes, the whole Cree nation he must have behind him now, if he would win the contest.

Three Arrows then examined the buildings more thoroughly, for some were still smoking. He was glad to find the trader's house, the store and the stables practically unscathed; but if a wind arose from the south, he knew that the smoldering embers would be revived. Every moment was precious; he needed to know exactly who the enemy were and the direction they had taken. Both he and Whirlwind were tired and hungry and in need of rest and food. He put Whirlwind in the stable and fed her, and then went to search out food for himself.

Looking towards the river, he saw a canoe approaching cautiously. Recognizing one of the trader's faithful servants, he waved to him to come in, signaling to him that he was alone. The man paddled quickly in, and Three Arrows soon learned all that had taken place. He appreciated the bravery, cleverness and sacrifice of the trader in saving the lives of the people, and by this he was even more roused to the determination of rescuing his friend. He impressed upon the canoe man the necessity of landing and working to put out every spark and smoldering ember, lest there should be a renewal of the fire. Three Arrows gave him a helping hand at a few of the most threatened points, then, after swallowing some food, he brought out Whirlwind and sped away on her back. He followed the trail until he

was sure of the direction the raiders had taken, then he turned eastward and rode as hard as he could in the direction of his father's band.

Three Arrows found his father with his tribesmen in their council tent. There was earnest and excited discussion going on, but the imperious young man did not wait to listen. The chief and his people were surprised to see him appear so suddenly, weary and travel-stained, and demanded the reason. Then Three Arrows entered the council tent and delivered a war address. He so thrilled his hearers that he brought every young warrior present to his feet, demanding that he should lead them at once against the foe. But the chief stayed their impetuosity and informed Three Arrows that he had much to tell him. The Blackfeet had surprised one of their own camps and had carried away some of their young girls, among them Three Arrows' sister Omeme, whom he so dearly loved, and her friend Wanda in whom he had taken a fond interest. Three Arrows was filled with anguish at these words and bowed his head.

"We are not enough," said he, rousing himself. "I must seek help from the other bands." Then to his father he said, "You might get your warriors ready while I go after the others."

"Take a fresh horse," advised his father.

"Whirlwind is as ready as I am," replied Three Arrows.

"Stay here," said the chief, "and I will send runners to the other bands."

"You may send them to all the bands," said Three Arrows, "but I must go myself to the head chief, Crooked Arm. We must rouse the whole Cree nation this time." And so saying, he rode away to the southwest.

Chief Two Horses was as good as his word. He called his best runners, gave them their orders, and sent them away upon the best horses that he had. Then he set to work to rally his own warriors and put them in fighting trim. He found the whole band eager to second his commands, for everything that Three Arrows wished they said must be done.

Chief Crooked Arm and his band, when Three Arrows found them, were encamped beside a beautiful lake, feasting upon fish and fresh buffalo meat. The chief was surprised and angry when he heard of the raid upon the trading post, the dispersion of the Cree people there, and the capture of the trader, whom he had always known as a fair and honorable man. He called his council together and asked Three Arrows to state the facts to them, which Three Arrows did in an address of fire, so that the young men demanded a war dance and called upon him to lead

it. The older men wondered at this great eloquence. "It is long since we have heard such an orator," said one of them who had himself been famous as a speaker in his younger days.

"It is long since we have heard such a counselor and war leader," declared Chief Crooked Arm. For Three Arrows in his address had drawn up and pictured for them a plan of campaign that would rouse and cement the Crees in one great fighting force. They were to administer such a crushing defeat to the Blackfeet that they would not come back, but would permit the Crees to live in peace for many summers; then, if in their final treatment of the defeated Blackfeet they showed mercy mixed with firmness, perhaps the Crees could establish a peace with them for all time. Thus the white traders would be given some measure of protection so that they might go on with their work of bringing in useful things for the comfort of the Indians.

"This young man Three Arrows is a precious gift to our people," declared Chief Crooked Arm. "His lips flower into good words, and the fruits of them lie in the future. May his vision come true. How is it that we have not heard from him before in our council?" But while Chief Crooked Arm presented this query, he was too much a man of business to await the answer. He called his people at once to

action, and declared that there was no better plan to work on than the one suggested. So he issued the proclamation which practically made Three Arrows his chief of staff, as white army officers would say; for Three Arrows was now looked up to by all the sub-chiefs, and they heeded his advice, directions and commands.

And Three Arrows seemed to be everywhere, with his sharp eyes, his wise counsel, his abounding energy, and his burning enthusiasm. His praise was in the mouth of every warrior, young or old, and every boy in the camp who could shoot an arrow, wanted to go out and serve under him, to follow wherever he should lead.

Within two days Chief Crooked Arm struck camp and marched eastward, picking up several Indian bands on the way, until he came to the camp of Chief Two Horses. When the men were all marshaled upon the plains, Chief Crooked Arm and Three Arrows were seen to have some two thousand well-horsed, well-armed and gorgeously decorated warriors at their command. It was a stirring sight to see this host careering on the plains in the sunlight, and to watch them go through their maneuvers. But the leader in all this practice, no matter how the sub-chiefs tried to outdo one another and win praise from Crooked Arm, was Three Arrows on his shining

Whirlwind. The maneuvers he suggested were thrilling even to Indians accustomed to feats of skill by man and horse. But Three Arrows appeared to be little concerned with such praise; he had awakened to the idea of fashioning this body of warriors into as perfect an instrument as he had labored to make of himself. He was, however, moved by the eager response that he had awakened in their hearts.

The plan of campaign agreed upon was to divide the warriors into two sections. One section was to make a demonstration from the northwest, displaying enough warriors to call out the whole Blackfoot force, and then, before engaging them, retreat before them until they had been led well out on the plains. The other section was to detour to the southeast and come up and attack the unprotected camp, liberate Mr. Rankin and the other captives, and hold the camp in the interval preceding the peace parley.

Chief Crooked Arm and Chief Two Horses had charge of the first section, while Three Arrows was placed in command of the second. There were about a thousand warriors in each group. Crooked Arm divided his force again into two sections; one, of about four hundred men, under the command of Two Horses, and the other under himself. Two Horses and his men were to spread out over the prairies well to the west and reveal themselves gradually to the

Blackfoot camp. Crooked Arm hoped in this way to have Two Horses first attract the warriors, then retreat before them, and even as the Blackfeet thought they were driving all before them, to cut in upon their right flank and rear.

Chief Two Horses was keenly sensitive to the fact that the honor of his command came to him chiefly because he was the father of Three Arrows. Never before this had Chief Crooked Arm paid much attention to Chief Two Horses or given him any special post of honor. To think that the son whom he had despised had raised him to the highest point of honor he had ever reached in his own nation! A little while ago this thought would have filled Chief Two Horses with bitterness, but it did not do so now, for he too had come to appreciate the greatness of his son. His bitterest thought was that he had had little or no part in the making of that fine young man and in the training of so noble a spirit. But with all that, Chief Two Horses was still proud and ambitious. He wished for honors on his own account. He would handle this attack upon the Blackfeet in such a way that Chief Crooked Arm would appreciate him for himself and not merely because of his son.

VIII

FIGHTING THE BLACKFEET

COMING upon the camp of the Blackfeet, Chief Two Horses spread his men well to the westward. The men at the northern end of the line disclosed themselves first to the enemy, and the others appeared gradually upon their right, as though more and more bands were coming from that direction, until the whole western horizon seemed to be dotted with Cree warriors.

There was quick arming and mounting in hot haste in the Blackfoot camp. The warriors assembled in battle array to defend their camp and bravely charged the foe. Two Horses carried out the maneuver, as he had been commanded. His men fired their guns at the Blackfeet and then, as though overcome by panic, turned, first by ones and twos and then in larger groups, until all were fleeing precipitately, with the Blackfeet yelling their war cries and racing after them.

Though he did as he was commanded, this was a maneuver that Chief Two Horses did not like, and so, as soon as he saw the first Crees appearing upon the

enemy's flank, he signaled to his men, turned and charged straight at the Blackfeet. His men wheeled quickly and followed him bravely. The Blackfoot warrior who faced him Chief Two Horses brought to the ground with a bullet from his gun; then, flinging this weapon away, he snatched his shield and war club and struck with terrible precision as he entered the ranks of the Blackfeet. His buffalo-hide shield protected his face and body, but a spear ripped his right thigh to the bone. Nevertheless he retained his seat upon his horse, and two of his warriors were prompt to come to his assistance.

From the north Chief Crooked Arm with his band came swiftly upon the Blackfeet while they were hotly engaged with Two Horses and his men. The Blackfeet warriors quickly realized that they had been trapped and that they now fought a losing battle, and many turned to retreat, hoping to reach their camp and defend it. But the Cree warriors on fresh and speedy horses cut in upon them and the Blackfeet were surrounded. Not one of them asked for mercy. They fought until every man had been killed or wounded or unhorsed. It was a complete victory for the Crees.

Three Arrows had been even more successful in his maneuver. With his warriors he quickly surrounded the whole Blackfoot camp, having his horse-

men ride around it in the customary Indian way. Some old men and boys who had been left behind came out and fought him bravely, and several of the Blackfoot women also fought for their homes with great determination and succeeded in wounding two Cree warriors. His warriors expected that Three Arrows would rush the camp, but instead he caused his men to continue their riding around the camp, this time at a slower rate, while he entered the circle and called for a parley.

“If there is a man here to speak for this camp, let him stand forth,” demanded Three Arrows, speaking clearly in the Blackfoot tongue.

An old man, still as straight as an arrow, walked boldly out and faced him.

“Before I speak with you,” said Three Arrows to this brave, “you must give the white trader, Mr. Rankin, and the Cree Indian maidens you took from the camp of Chief Two Horses, their freedom and let them come to us here.”

“The white trader we have with us,” said the old Blackfoot, “but the Cree maidens we have not. They are with another band that did not go with us to the trading post.”

“Where is that band?” demanded Three Arrows.

“Gone in that direction,” said the Blackfoot, pointing towards the southwest.

It was a keen disappointment to Three Arrows, but he was relieved to hear that Mr. Rankin was in the camp, and he demanded that he be liberated at once. The old Blackfoot gave a sharp command, and there was a short period of absolute silence, except for the gentle thud of horses' hoofs on the prairie as the Cree warriors in that unbroken circle cantered gracefully and inexorably around the camp.

Mr. Rankin was soon liberated and brought before Three Arrows. The trader had not been told the name of his rescuer; hence his wonder and delight were very great when he saw before him Three Arrows, sitting on his beautiful Whirlwind like a proud young chief. He hastened over the prairie to greet him and thank him for his rescue, but Three Arrows appeared stern and haughty. He gave a sharp sign and two of his warriors swung out of the circle and came to his side. He bade one of them give his horse to Mr. Rankin and help him to mount, and then take his own place on the other warrior's horse. Mr. Rankin could not understand the action of his young friend. For a moment he thought that his promotion, or whatever had come to him, had robbed him of some of his affection for him. But as soon as Three Arrows saw Mr. Rankin mounted he rode up to him and extended his left hand, thus indicating the warmth of his greeting, and the heartiness of

that grip left Mr. Rankin with no doubts as to the fulness of his affection.

But if Mr. Rankin did not understand the action of Three Arrows, the old Blackfoot did, and he gave another sharp command. Several horses that had not been wanted by the Blackfoot warriors had been hidden in their tents. One of the best of these, with a new blanket over it, was now brought out and presented to Three Arrows. Then Mr. Rankin understood that Three Arrows had been affronted by his friend's having been returned to the Crees on foot, and he smiled, slipped from the horse he had mounted, and returned it to its owner. Quickly he rolled up the blanket and gave it to the warrior as a token of his thanks, and then mounted the new horse.

At a sign from Three Arrows the galloping Crees now halted, each in his place and facing the camp.

"These people took thirty horses from you," said Three Arrows to Mr. Rankin. "How many guns and other things did they take?"

"That doesn't count so much as the burning of the trading post," said Mr. Rankin.

"The trading post is not burned," said Three Arrows; "only the stockade and the gate, and the storehouse near it."

"Then we can forget and forgive the rest," said Mr. Rankin, delighted to hear this news.

"But these people have stolen much, and they intended to burn the entire place," said Three Arrows sternly.

"Even so, I beg you not to think of destroying this camp by way of revenge," said Mr. Rankin earnestly.

"Blackfoot," said Three Arrows, addressing their ambassador who had stood straight and unmoved before him while he and Mr. Rankin had been speaking, "do you understand what this white man has said?"

"No, I do not," replied the Blackfoot. Quickly Three Arrows told him in the Blackfoot tongue, and the old man was visibly affected. "The white man is a merciful man," he said with bowed head. "Say to him that I wish our people had not harmed him."

A messenger now rode up to Three Arrows and told him of the complete victory won by Chief Crooked Arm. He intimated that Chief Two Horses had been badly wounded, and was about to give an account of the chief's heroic part in the conflict, how he had seemed to fight with the prowess of ten warriors, when Three Arrows cut him short.

"Chief Two Horses was always a great warrior," he said. "It is enough to know that he is alive. He has done his part, and if he has been wounded, the enemy has paid a great price for his wounds. I know how a warrior such as he is fights. Tell Chief

Crooked Arm for me that the Blackfoot camp is at his command, and that trader Rankin, who has been freed, pleads that it may be spared for his sake and for the sake of the new peace between the Cree and Blackfoot nations. Ask Chief Crooked Arm if he will now relieve me of this command, and call me and Mr. Rankin to stand before him at once."

The messenger sped away and soon another messenger appeared, directing Three Arrows to turn his command over to Chief Flying Feathers and to appear before Chief Crooked Arm.

The great chief greeted Mr. Rankin cordially, and the trader thanked him warmly for his timely rescue.

"But what is this you say about sparing these dogs?" demanded Chief Crooked Arm.

"I wish you would let this young man speak for me," said Mr. Rankin. "He knows your tongue better than I do, and he also knows my mind on this matter."

"Three Arrows has a tongue like a river of light," said Chief Crooked Arm. "It finds its way into the dark places of our minds and gives them light and fire. He always wins us to his way, for he is a brave and a clever man. He won our people to this conflict, and he won our head warriors to accept his plan of attack."

"He is one of the wisest as he is one of the bravest of men," replied Mr. Rankin. "May he succeed again in persuading you to accept his counsel!"

Three Arrows spoke swiftly and to the point. He recounted the events that had led up to the present moment, and pictured what was now most to be desired. With the presence of the white trader, he said, the blessings of a peaceful life were promised. The chief thing to be desired was peace amongst the people of the plains, so that they might hunt and trade and prosper. Their present life was one that meant continual bloodshed, anxiety and poverty.

Chief Crooked Arm bluntly asked Three Arrows if he had anything better to give the people of the plains.

"Something infinitely better," declared Three Arrows; "a lesson that will mean a long peace. Mr. Rankin is ready to forgive the people for what they have done to him, though I should say that they should be made to replace the horses which were stolen from him, and also to pay for the guns and ammunition which they took. Our warriors may take the guns, horses and equipment of the men slain in battle. Let the wounded be returned to the camp and the camp be unmolested. The Blackfeet have already lost enough men and horses to incline

them to be quiet for a long time, and if we are merciful to them now they will be our best pleaders for peace in the future."

Chief Crooked Arm looked around among his warriors to see how the words of Three Arrows had impressed them. But they were not following him. Their fighting blood had been roused; the victory had been too complete, and they were thirsting for spoils.

"I must have Blackfoot maidens for the maidens I have lost," said Chief Two Horses from his blanket on the ground. "And I must have horses."

Other chiefs made similar claims for revenge. Three Arrows soon saw that all Mr. Rankin's peaceful plans were to be set aside, and he whispered this word to him.

"If you wish peace, chief," said Mr. Rankin to Crooked Arm, "you must begin by acting peacefully. As for me, not a moccasin string shall I take from the Blackfeet."

"White men cannot understand the ways of the plains," said Chief Crooked Arm.

"Then excuse me from your councils," said Mr. Rankin, rising and leaving.

Three Arrows also rose, though many sought to restrain him. "You do not listen to me," said Three Arrows. "I go with him."

IX

ENTER A STRANGER

WHEN Chief Two Horses had recovered from his wound he was a badly crippled man, and the band called loudly for Three Arrows.

“It is bad enough,” said the people, “to lose our daughters and our horses to the Blackfeet, without losing the best of our young men to these white traders.”

The chief heeded the pleadings of his people, and with his whole band went to Mr. Rankin’s fort to seek for Three Arrows. They found the fort re-built, the stockades and gates bigger and stronger than ever, and a larger force of whites and Indians employed there. They put forth their pleas to Three Arrows to return to his band.

“I shall not return until I find who has stolen my sister and her friend,” said Three Arrows. “I shall get them back or I shall know the reason why. Many bands come here to trade, and I am keeping my eyes open.”

Chief Two Horses looked with undisguised admiration upon his son. By his exercises and his bearing

Three Arrows had almost overcome his lameness, and nothing of his deformity was noticeable when he was on his horse. On the other hand, Chief Two Horses himself was a confirmed cripple; the wounded hip had healed badly. He pleaded with Three Arrows to return to his band, but his efforts were in vain. The chief was quick to appreciate the favor of the fort people which had been conferred upon his son, and also the deep respect that the boy felt for the big, bluff, kind-hearted trader. He now appealed to the people, and especially to the trader, to reason with Three Arrows.

"I don't wonder that you want such a man with you in your band," said Mr. Rankin. "He is a young warrior, horseman and hunter that any chief might well be proud of; but he has had to look after himself for so long that he is now his own master. He still hopes, after all these months of search, to find his lost sister and her friend. He is a determined young man and will go just where his will or whim may take him. No one can hold that boy now except the man whom he honors or who will help him in his purpose."

While these two were talking together, a little black-coated white man rode into the fort. The trader hastened to greet him, and handing the stranger's horse to Three Arrows, told him to look

well after it. Then he introduced the newcomer to Chief Two Horses.

"This is the Rev. Robert Rundle, the new missionary from Norway House and recently from across the big sea-water. He has come to teach you and your people the Bible and the good way," said the trader. "Give him a hearty welcome, chief, and let him talk to your people."

The chief courteously welcomed the stranger and wondered what his business could be, for he could not understand the occupation the trader described. Most of the white men he had met had come to trade, and a few to hunt. The chief took Mr. Rundle out of the fort gate and over to his band. At his word his people formed a long line and then came and shook hands with the newcomer. It was a very formal welcome and not a little trying to the white man, who had just had a long and tiresome ride. When the handshaking was over, the people surrounded the stranger and prepared to listen to his message.

The tired missionary spoke kindly but he did not mince his words. He had seen a good deal of Indian life at Norway House and in the few weeks that he had been on the plains. He said that he was an ambassador of the Son of God to call men and women to walk in a better way. At first Chief Two Horses seemed much pleased and interested, but finally he

became restless. Noticing this disapproval on the part of their chief, some of the younger warriors on the outskirts of the crowd withdrew, and once out of hearing of the missionary, held a lively conversation and indulged in some ridicule.

"The little black-coat says that we should not steal horses or fight. What are we to do, then?" one demanded.

"And he says the Son of God commands us to forgive our enemies; that that was what he did," said another. "Why, if he were the Son of God he would sweep his enemies off the plains. Either the black-coat can't speak rightly for himself, or the interpreter speaks wrongly for him."

Chief Two Horses escorted Mr. Rundle safely back to the fort, and in parting addressed him. "You may be the friend of the white trader," he said, "but you do not understand Indians, and you do not speak as their friend. You would make women of them and leave them at the mercy of their enemies. Before you speak again, wait until you hear from the Great Spirit of the Plains that guards all the lives of our people and has kept us from being killed off by the Blackfeet and our other enemies."

"And are the Blackfeet not children of the Great Spirit as much as you are?" demanded Mr. Rundle.

"They no doubt have their Maneto but he is not

ours," said Chief Two Horses with emphasis and dignity; "and until you change your message, speak not again to my people. I am a chief of warriors."

With head erect and his blanket wrapped closely around him as though he would avoid further contamination, the chief, with the assistance of a strong-armed warrior, walked away, and to save his people from hearing such corrupt teaching, had his band strike camp, and they moved on.

The next morning Mr. Rundle asked for his horse. Three Arrows brought it, helped the missionary to mount and saw him ride away. Then the young Indian hastened to see the trader. He was full of inquiries about the new white man, but he was cautious in his approach. The bluff trader wondered at his eager face.

"What is it, Three Arrows? What has happened?" he asked in his frank, blunt way.

"The white man," exclaimed Three Arrows, "who is he? What is his business? What does he want in this country? He sent my people away angry, especially the chief and his warriors. He can't ride a horse or shoot a bow. He had to be helped on his horse like an old woman, and when his horse started quickly, he fell off and had to be put on again."

Three Arrows had a look on his face that was a mixture of laughter and pity. The missionary would

have needed the riding skill of Three Arrows himself to have maintained his seat upon that horse; but the imperious young rider could excuse no man, much less a highly praised white man, for losing his seat. The newcomer had been assisted with such impatient force that he had had to grip his saddle with both hands to keep from going over the other side of the horse. The action was so strenuous that it caused the horse to rear and plunge and toss the rider over its head, so that he might have been seriously hurt if Three Arrows had not caught him. For such a rider Three Arrows had only scorn, and his look of disdain amused the trader, but he answered the young Indian straightly.

“That man may not be able to ride a horse or shoot a bow and arrow like you, Three Arrows, but he can read a book, preach a sermon, write a letter, and commune with the Great Spirit,” said Mr. Rankin. Then he added, with a bit of impatience, “Don’t think, boy, because you can ride a horse and shoot well, that you have mastered all the arts.”

“What the warriors and wise men of my tribe know and can do, I know and can do,” said Three Arrows. He drew himself up with such hauteur and spoke with so much dignity that trader Rankin, who thought he knew his man, was taken by surprise. He quickly realized that he had misjudged Three Ar-

rows, and saw that while he was filled with youthful curiosity and had a keen sense of humor, he was also sensitive, high-minded and proud.

"My friend, let me explain," said Mr. Rankin, with a little more deliberation and in a milder tone. "That man can do what your best and wisest Indians never thought of doing. He has the Book of Life and he teaches it."

"What does the Book of Life contain?" Three Arrows asked, somewhat mollified but still imperious in spirit.

"The laws of God," said Mr. Rankin.

"And what are they?" asked Three Arrows.

"Better ask our friend," said Mr. Rankin, indicating with a wave of his hand the departed missionary.

"No, you tell me," said the eager young Indian. "I prefer to hear it from you. I know you, and I do not know him."

Trader Rankin might have dismissed another Indian from his presence with some sharp command, but he felt that he could not deal thus with Three Arrows. Under those thoughtful, penetrating eyes he found himself telling the story of Moses; of his birth, of his mother and the cruel decree of the king, of his attempt to save his people and their rejection of him, of his meeting with God in the desert place and the giving of the law that said, "Thou shalt

serve God only, thou shalt not kill, steal, lie or covet."

Three Arrows was fascinated by the story. The threatened tragedy of this babyhood, so like his own, awakened his keenest sympathy, and he followed the narrator with intense eagerness. But his intelligence kept pace with the rising tide of his feelings. He had been trained in too stubborn a school to be swept off his intellectual feet, even by the words of the big trader whom he all but adored. He had been carried along with such complete sympathy, however, that the climax brought him to a sudden halt. It was like the snubbing of a running horse, and he was ready to cry out against the check. Then he caught himself.

"I have never heard of such things," he said, with stubborn, firmly set jaws. "Those laws are wrong. The Great Spirit tells us to take care of ourselves and our people, and to kill our enemies. It is the part of a strong man to steal horses, and the more he steals the stronger he is in the sight of the people."

"But in time of sickness and when you are in danger of all starving together, you and the other tribes behave like brothers," said Mr. Rankin. "That is the way the Great Spirit would have you act and live all the time."

"And as soon as the danger passes," retorted Three Arrows quickly, "the tribes are at war again."

"It is just because that is so that the Great Spirit has had thought of you and sent this man to lead you in a different way," said Mr. Rankin. "You had better go at once after this missionary and learn the Bible truth from him, Three Arrows. I have told you only a small part. Stay with him, learn of him, until your soul is filled with the new light. This is the very man and helper whom you want for your quest. He is a great traveler. He will visit all the tribes. He fears no chief or band. Go to him; go with him, and you may find the objects of your quest—light for your mind, and the recovery of the two women whom you love."

With his head hanging low, Three Arrows went out to the fort stables and found his beloved Whirlwind. He sat beside her for a long time, deep in thought. Then he rose, patted her, rubbed her glossy coat. Finally he saddled her and led her out into the yard of the fort.

X

OFF ON A NEW ROAD

"WHEREVER have you been this long time?" demanded trader Rankin. "I have been looking all over the fort for you."

"I have been with Whirlwind," said Three Arrows meekly, wondering at the glowing face of the trader.

"I might have guessed it," said Mr. Rankin. "I might have known where you would go when you wanted to think things out quietly. Here is a letter that I should like you to deliver to the missionary, Mr. Rundle. Take it to him as quickly as you can and do what he tells you to do. You will see that it will come out all right for you. We shall miss you here, boy, but it is for your good and perhaps for ours too, that you go to him—at least for a little while." He then gave Three Arrows a rather bulky letter. "See that you go well equipped," he added kindly. "Get a new gun and all the powder and ball you want, and take a new blanket. If there is anything else that you want, you shall have it."

"You are very good to me," said Three Arrows gratefully.

“Some day, perhaps, you will know that I am greatly your debtor,” said Mr. Rankin. “You have done a great thing for me, Three Arrows. You do not know it now, but some day perhaps you will.”

So with his new gun and blanket, and with a small bag of dried meat, for he had too much confidence in himself as a hunter to take any large quantity of provisions, Three Arrows started off on the trail of the missionary.

The great wide prairies with their tall, waving grass were before him, stretching away southward and westward as far as he could see. On a distant rise of ground appeared clusters of black spots, and Three Arrows knew them to be buffalo, feeding peacefully. To the north the land dipped into the bed of the Saskatchewan River, whose mighty tide drained a territory from the Rocky Mountains eastward that was as large as the continent of Europe and wound its way towards the sunrise until it discharged its waters into Lake Winnipeg. This river was the only defined roadway in the land. The trails through the grass were constantly changing, and only an expert Indian could be sure of the way he was going.

But into that vast land with its illimitable prairies, with its wandering, warring Indian tribes, and with its few fur-trading posts strung along the river bank, Robert Rundle took his lonely way. With a faith

that refused to know any difficulties as insuperable, he had accepted appointment to this vast mission field and had entered bravely upon it. Just a few months previously, in June, 1840, he had landed at Norway House, then the Hudson's Bay Company's main trading post at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg, and had at once begun to minister to the traders and the Indians there. He set to work to master the Cree tongue and, what seemed harder, the management of the birchbark canoe. On the arrival of his superintendent and leader, the Rev. James Evans, in September, he proceeded to Fort Edmonton, the territory allotted to him. Here he had to learn to ride Indian ponies, that he might visit the different trading posts, and these he found as difficult to manage as he had found the canoe. Three Arrows had been quick to note the missionary's deficiency as a horseman, but Three Arrows had yet to discover the dogged, persevering spirit that was wrapped up in this little white man, and to know that conquering the Indians' means of transportation—canoes and horses and dogs—would be amongst the smallest of his achievements in that land.

Three Arrows was now hard upon the missionary's trail. He knew that he had gone westward, knew that his destination was the next trading post, and knew also that in journeying he would keep at least within

sight of the great river. As the river was very crooked, Three Arrows struck across the prairies to the place where he thought the white man would make his camp. Mr. Rundle, the trader had told him, had learned to rough it. He would travel as far as he could during the day, and when night overtook him he would turn aside for such shelter as he could find, a coulee with some trees, if possible; but more frequently he would spread his blanket on the open plains or on the river bank. Here he would make a little fire of wood or buffalo chips, boil a pot of tea, and roast some buffalo meat. Then, commanding himself and his work to his Spirit Master who had made the stars that shone above him and the earth upon which he lay, he would roll himself in his blanket and go to sleep, his tethered horse feeding quietly by his side.

After Three Arrows had journeyed for two hours and had come into the proximity of a herd of buffalo, he was attracted by their movements. They were closing in for mutual protection. Up the next rise of land Three Arrows went very cautiously, and before he reached the top, slipped off his horse. Worming his way through the grass he reached the highest point, and from that place of vantage carefully scanned the prairies. He was not mistaken; he had read the movements of the buffalo aright. Away to

the south he saw a band of Indians coming swiftly northward, and from their decorations he judged they were on the warpath. He crept back quickly, took a detour northward under the shelter of the hill, and made Whirlwind show her paces. He would need all his caution and her speed to reach that missionary and convey him to a place of safety.

But Mr. Rundle, when he did get on his horse, made it take him a long way before he thought of resting. It was quite dark before he made his camp, and it was in the darkness that Three Arrows came upon him. In fact, such was the gloom that shrouded the prairies that Three Arrows saw the light of the campfire from a long distance, stabbing the darkness of the plains as a lone star pierces the heavens on a black night. "The poor fellow," said Three Arrows to himself, "he no more knows how to camp and protect himself on the prairies than he knows how to ride a horse!"

As he came nearer, with his Indian quietness and caution, he saw figures pass between him and the campfire. "Too late, after all my hurrying," he thought, but he unslung his gun and loaded it, and saw that his precious bow and arrows were in readiness if he should need them, for he still had more confidence in them than in the white man's gun.

At first he thought the creeping figures might be

wolves, but he soon discovered that they were Indians, probably preparing to steal the white man's horse. What kept them back from acting more promptly, Three Arrows did not know. There stood the horse, near the owner, it is true; but the man was rolled up in his blanket and lay like a log, the little fire glowing within three feet of him. Perhaps the unsuspecting confidence of the white man and his manner awakened in the would-be thieves a thought that he might have some protection of which they knew nothing, and thus induced them to proceed with caution.

Three Arrows crept up in the darkness with his horse close behind him. He then rose cautiously to his feet, his gun to his shoulder, and as the Indians put out their hands to take the missionary's horse, he pulled back the trigger with a snap. The tiny noise rang out in the stillness with a startling, clear-cut report. The Indians crouched to the ground, then turned and saw what in the shadows and uncertain firelight seemed to be a strange apparition; but there was nothing uncertain about the gun that was pointed towards them. White men's ways are different from Indians', they thought quickly, and they had done well to be extra cautious. They lost no time in backing away through the grass, and, mounting their ponies, fled from the place.

Thus it came to be spread abroad amongst the Indians of the plains that though this white man was careless about putting out his campfire, he and his horse were protected by a spirit, a great Windegoo, with a gun that in a single discharge could kill many people. Neither Mr. Rundle nor Three Arrows could give any foundation for this rumor, but it was a better protection to Mr. Rundle at many an evening campfire than a whole band of Indian warriors could have been. To fight superstition may be one of the great battles of the missionaries, but to enjoy the advantage among superstitious peoples of being a favorite of the occult powers is not always an unfortunate thing.

Three Arrows did not know what a strange appearance he and his horse made as they stood together in that fitful firelight. It would have mattered little to him, however, for he was more impressed with the childish ignorance of the white man in this country, exposing himself thus to its perils. If he was such a great man as the trader had said he was, it was a strange thing that he did not take better care of himself. And certainly if he did not, his career on the prairies would soon be cut short. Three Arrows would indeed have been surprised if he had been told that he had been sent providentially to be that little white man's guardian angel.

Just now, however, Three Arrows impatiently knocked that fire about until not a spark remained. Then he removed the missionary's horse to a short distance, retethered it, and also hobbled Whirlwind. He took out a little dried meat and chewed it, and proceeded to roll his new blanket around him, but he found little sleep that night. It was more than just the strangeness of the situation, of guarding a white man ignorant of the ways of the plains, with the possibility of a renewed visit from the Indians, that agitated him. What the trader had declared to be the laws of God, so different from those that Three Arrows had been taught and that his own Indian people considered to be the rule of conduct for men, crowded his mind and demanded explanation. Then, too, the idea of the Book of Life filled his mind with many inquiries. Could it be possible that this innocent white man, so stupid at riding a horse and now even more stupid in sleeping beside his campfire, might lead him into any new light? Perhaps the morning would reveal something.

A BUFFALO STAMPEDE

WHEN Mr. Rundle awoke the next morning he was extremely surprised to see a bright-faced Indian youth standing beside him. This young man had stirred up the ashes and made a lively fire. Beyond him were two horses, cropping the prairie grass. Mr. Rundle threw his blanket back and sprang up, rubbing his eyes and trying to think where he had seen that young Indian before.

Three Arrows stepped forward and gravely handed him the letter Mr. Rankin had placed in his hand. Mr. Rundle took the letter, opened it, and read the contents quickly. His face lit up with brightness, and Three Arrows thought he had never seen so beautiful a smile. He wondered what the missionary had seen on the bit of paper to make him look that way.

“Can you read, young man?” Mr. Rundle asked. “Do you know what your master, Mr. Rankin, has written here?” Three Arrows shook his head. “That is too bad,” continued Mr. Rundle, still looking deeply pleased. “You will have to learn to read, and

then you will be dependent upon no man for your message. Listen to what this letter says:

“The young man who bears this to you is the brightest and cleverest young Indian I have met in this country. He is one of the finest horsemen and a great buffalo runner and hunter, but he is more. By his curiosity and zeal for truth he has awakened my own soul, and because of him you will find a new man when again you see me. Three Arrows is eager to know the way of truth, and what he considers the way of truth he will walk in, even if he walks that way alone. He also wishes to read the Bible for himself. Give him all the help you can, and while he is with you he will serve you as a son. See that he gets what he needs from the Company, and charge the same to me.”

“There, young man, is your recommendation; no man could ask for a better one.”

Three Arrows had listened intently to the reading of this letter and his heart beat quickly. He had feared that Mr. Rankin might have mentioned to Mr. Rundle the secret of his endeavor to find his sister and sweetheart, and he felt greatly relieved. He was not yet ready to share that secret with Mr. Rundle.

“Trader Rankin is a good man,” Three Arrows said simply. “But he has told me that you are a

better man, and he would have me follow you and learn of you."

"Suppose I have a dip in the river and freshen up," said Mr. Rundle; "then we'll have some breakfast. After that we shall have our first Bible lesson, before we set out on our way to Edmonton."

Meanwhile Three Arrows busied himself with the fire. Then he too went to the river bank to fill the little kettle with water. Here he came across Mr. Rundle's clothes, but the missionary he did not see. For one moment his heart leaped in anxiety, and in the next, his sharp eyes saw his friend far out in the stream, coming up after a long swim underneath the water and shaking his head, sporting in the river current like a young otter.

"Well," remarked Three Arrows to himself, "if that man cannot ride a horse, at least he can swim." And he watched Mr. Rundle for some time with fascinated eyes. Three Arrows knew something about straight swimming, but such diving and playing about was an entirely new thing to him. This man swam and played in the water so that you knew it was a delight to him, and he seemed almost as much at home there as on land.

With his kettle of water, the boy hurried back to the fire and prepared the breakfast, which consisted simply of tea with a little sugar, and some buffalo

meat. It was quickly disposed of, and the momentous hour arrived. Three Arrows saw Mr. Rundle open his saddle-bag and from its depths take a leather-bound book.

"Here is the Bible, the book that has the words of life for us all," said Mr. Rundle, opening it and laying it on the prairie.

Three Arrows came and looked at it closely. He touched it reverently, but neither the vision of it nor the touch produced any strange effect in him, as he had expected. Mr. Rundle was quick to notice the look of disappointment on the young face, and his swift intuition read the reason.

"No, no, my dear friend," he said, "there is nothing in the volume itself—the book is made by men, printed by men, written in men's language. That part of it is little. We must read it, read through it, know that God is speaking to us."

"Trader Rankin said the Book of Life tells God's great laws for us; that we should worship God, who made the earth and sky, and that we must not war or steal," said Three Arrows.

Mr. Rundle's eyes smiled brightly. "Then Mr. Rankin has told you the truth and you have got hold of it," said Mr. Rundle, already pleased with his pupil. "So here we have God's letter of love to his children. That letter from Mr. Rankin—it tells what

he thinks of you, and how he thinks you can serve me, and how I can help you; but it tells most of all of how he loves you. And that's the way God speaks to us in his Bible."

"Is all that in the book?" Three Arrows asked.

"Yes, it is all there; the book reveals God's laws and love to us," Mr. Rundle said.

"Then teach me to read it for myself," Three Arrows replied.

"It is hard work mastering letters, Three Arrows," Mr. Rundle warned him. "Let me give you something from the book to help your mind at its work." He picked up the Bible, turned to the first chapter, and began reading, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." He read to the thirteenth verse before he paused, and Three Arrows listened with intense interest. His eyes revealed his soul captivated and filled with wonder at the words that he had heard.

"Then that is how it all came about!" he exclaimed, and his gaze for a moment left the face of Mr. Rundle and swept the circle of the heavens.

"Yes," Mr. Rundle replied, delighted with the keen interest of his new pupil. He then quoted the first part of the Twenty-fourth Psalm and added, "That is the story, my friend. 'The earth is the

Lord's and all that therein is.' And shall we not join the people who are earnestly seeking his face?"

Three Arrows turned shining, awestruck eyes upon his friend and asked, "Is there more like that about God in the Book?"

"Yes, and even more wonderful," was the answer.

The missionary shut the book after he had ended his reading, closed his eyes, and lifted his face upward. The sweet look that had impressed Three Arrows once before, appeared again upon his face. He talked to the Great Spirit as simply and straightly as Three Arrows had ever talked to his loved mother, asking for grace and blessing upon Three Arrows and himself, and also that good-will and peace might spread through all that Western land.

"And now we should be off," Mr. Rundle said. "But before we go I will write out your first lesson for you." He took a piece of paper from his saddle-bag and printed the alphabet on it in large characters. Then he went over the letters twice with Three Arrows. "As we ride along," he said, "you might look at the paper and see how many of the letters you can learn before we reach the next camping place."

Three Arrows did precisely this. He wrestled away with A, B and C, while Mr. Rundle reveled in the

sights around him. Three Arrows was so determined to master those signs, as he called them, and to be able to read the book with its wonderful stories, that he was not as alert as usual to his duties as guide.

"Why," exclaimed Mr. Rundle suddenly, "look at that herd of buffalo! I don't think I ever saw such a lot of animals together, even at a shipping point for cattle."

At these words Three Arrows looked up instantly, and the effect upon him was electrical. "Fly!" he yelled. "It's a herd of buffalo on a stampede, and they will catch us between them and the river bank. Run, whip your horse, run for your life!"

With Whirlwind, Three Arrows might have got clear of the rushing host of mad buffalo—the whole plain seemed alive with them; they came up in thousands and seemed to be driven by some irresistible fury. But he had not ridden far when he saw what a hopeless task it was to get the missionary out of danger. His horse was by no means fast, but it might have done well enough if it had had a good rider. But Mr. Rundle lost his stirrup again and again, and had to stop to recover his footing and his breath.

"Follow me!" shouted Three Arrows, and he turned sharply to the left and ran right for the buffalo.

"The young rascal," thought Mr. Rundle, "he

has run off and left me to be run over by these mad creatures!" And he stopped his horse and tried to take in the situation and reason what was best to do. Turning in his saddle and seeing him standing still, Three Arrows beckoned violently to him to come on. It seemed to the missionary like running into destruction, but not seeing anything else to do, and with a prayer to God for help, he turned his horse and galloped after his guide.

Three Arrows made first for a big bull that was some distance ahead of the herd, and when he came beside him, sent an arrow into his heart, dropping him on the plains. He rode along and dropped another and another, thus forming a V. The mad buffalo at first jumped over their comrades and rushed on, but Three Arrows kept dropping others near the ones already killed, until he had got too many for the rest to jump over, and the herd broke around him. Taking a swift look behind him, Three Arrows was glad to see Mr. Rundle close by on his horse.

"Why don't you use your gun?" inquired the missionary, watching with amazement as the youth swiftly brought down buffalo after buffalo with bow and arrows.

"Not fast enough," declared Three Arrows, and he added, "Here, you take the gun, and if you see any big fellow trying to get over these dead ones,

shoot him. We'll be here a long time yet; the thickest part of the herd has still to come along."

Mr. Rundle took the gun. It was a muzzle loader, and he found it slow work putting in powder out of a horn and then dropping a ball and ramming it home with a rod. He did his best, but as he saw the young Indian's expert use of bow and arrow, he blessed God that he had sent such a helper to his side.

On and on came the herd, hour after hour. Three Arrows had killed twenty buffalo and Mr. Rundle several more. They had dropped them well, but there were many wild, pushing animals that tried to mount the heap of dead bodies and get forward. Both men had to be on the watch for their lives and the lives of their horses.

"Is there no end of them?" asked Mr. Rundle. "The sun is nearly at the meridian."

"I have seen a herd that took two days to pass," said Three Arrows, "but this one is weakening. They will all have passed by sundown, I think."

"We may be dead by that time with hunger and thirst," said Mr. Rundle. "Do you think we can stand it?"

"Yes," replied Three Arrows, cutting his reply short as he faced a huge buffalo that was trying to clamber over the dead ones, and sent an arrow with tremendous force between neck and shoulder. "That

was well placed," commented Mr. Rundle. But the buffalo was not killed outright, and he struggled to disentangle himself. Swiftly Three Arrows swung himself off his horse and with his tomahawk gave the final blow. Then, with a swift leap, he was in his place again on Whirlwind's back.

"Whatever should I have done without you?" exclaimed Mr. Rundle as he watched this expert work. "I didn't know I should have to face such things. Indeed, if I were to tell the people at home what I am facing right now, they would hardly believe me."

"I have seen it almost every year," Three Arrows said, "and bigger herds than this one; the prairie was black with them. But you said you were hungry. Here, take this dried buffalo meat and chew it. We must not get off our horses until the danger is past."

"Thank you," said the missionary, as Three Arrows handed him a piece of meat out of a wallet. "For how many other emergencies are you prepared?"

It was an unfeigned compliment, and for a moment Three Arrows relaxed the sternness of his expression. He thought this white man both braver and cooler than he had expected to find him; and now, in the midst of danger, he could calmly admire his work and praise him! He was a man, little and white as he was.

The boy had been a good judge of the size of the

herd, and by sundown there were only a few stragglers passing them.

"We can make camp now," said Three Arrows.

"Right here?" asked Mr. Rundle.

"No," replied Three Arrows, "back by the river. I'm thirsty, aren't you?"

"I'm nearly faint with thirst," replied Mr. Rundle. "And what must these horses be? They haven't flinched all day. What wonderful beasts they are! Let us hurry, then, to the river."

"I must get my arrows first," said Three Arrows. "And you get some buffalo tongues. They are good eating."

"What about the horses?" asked Mr. Rundle.

"The horses won't go far. About all the grass there is is at their feet. The rest has been almost tramped out of sight by the buffalo."

Three Arrows skilfully released arrow after arrow, and recovered twenty out of twenty-three that he had shot. Mr. Rundle had a hard time trying to cut out a buffalo tongue and at last gave it up. Instead he counted the buffalo that they had killed. There were twenty-eight carcasses heaped in a triangular space, and they were three deep at the apex. After he had recovered his arrows, Three Arrows cut out half a dozen tongues, and then, mounting their horses, the two men made for the river.

And what a sight met them there! The bank was quite steep, but over it the mad buffalo had plunged. Down the bank they had slid or rolled. Those that survived had plunged into the river and swam across, clambering up the opposite bank as best they could. Some of the bodies lying on the shore had been almost pounded into pulp by the other buffalo jumping upon them.

The horses carefully picked their way down the bank and took a long drink. "I think I'll wait until my drink is boiled," declared Mr. Rundle. "Running water is always good," said Three Arrows, and he also took a lengthy drink. Mr. Rundle, with the sight of the dead buffalo on the bank, was chary, but going a little further up the river he put his hands down, washed them and his face well, and took a few mouthfuls of the cool, refreshing water.

"We must ride for grass now," said Three Arrows, "and then we can make camp."

Mr. Rundle looked at this young man in dismay—he felt that he had hardly strength enough to clamber up the bank, and was counting the moments until he might roll himself up in his blanket. Three Arrows saw the distressed look. "No grass here," he explained laconically. "The horses must have something to eat or they cannot carry us to Edmonton."

XII

LIFE AT FORT EDMONTON

GRASS was found after an hour's ride, and as the hungry horses eagerly cropped it, the men prepared their supper. Mr. Rundle took the kettle and went to the river for water, while Three Arrows collected some dry grass and buffalo chips, struck sparks to it with his flint and steel, and got a fire going. He then cooked a buffalo tongue, and on this and tea they feasted. After supper Three Arrows took out his paper and studied his letters. Mr. Rundle read his Bible for a while, and then, looking up, caught the distressed look of Three Arrows as he puzzled over the paper.

"It's not an easy job, is it?" he asked, smiling. "But the first steps are the hardest. After you master the letters you will find the next step much easier, and it will be more interesting as you go on. Let me help you to make it interesting now."

He took a fresh piece of paper and wrote down an M. "What letter is that?" he asked. Three Arrows looked over his alphabet, and after some searching and studying, he named the letter.

Then Mr. Rundle wrote A, N, E, T, and O, having Three Arrows find each letter on his paper and name it.

"Now," said his teacher, "say them together." Three Arrows stumbled over the letters and finally said, "Man-e-to. Oh," he cried out, a look of awe coming over his face, "that is God!"

"Yes," said Mr. Rundle, happy at the effect this discovery had produced, "that is God's name in the Cree tongue." Then he wrote out the Cree for "In the beginning, God."

"There," said he, "that will show you what a good thing it is to know how to read and be able to discover great truths. Now let us read a little more."

Afterward they prayed together, and then Mr. Rundle pulled his blanket over him, curled up by the fire, and was soon fast asleep. Three Arrows, however, freshened up the blaze and studied his paper eagerly. There was no tired and distressed look now in his eyes, but only eagerness and determination.

The fire dying down, Three Arrows sprang up, caught the horses, and touched the missionary on the shoulder.

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Rundle, looking up.

"We must get out of here," said Three Arrows.

"But why?" demanded the missionary. "I'm as comfortable as can be."

"An enemy may see this fire, steal our horses and scalp us before morning," said Three Arrows.

"I've slept this way a good many nights now and no harm has come to me," said the sleepy missionary, sinking back into his blanket.

Three Arrows scattered the fire until not a spark was to be seen. "An enemy nearly got you last night," he said, quietly. "I was just in time to save you and your horse."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Rundle, rousing. "And you never told me?"

"Come," was the only answer. Three Arrows succeeded in getting the missionary on his horse and then, mounting his own, led the way over the prairie away from the fire. When he had gone far enough to satisfy him, "We can sleep here," he said, and they dismounted.

Mr. Rundle was soon rolled in his blanket and asleep. Three Arrows scanned the horizon and listened intently. All seemed well, so he, too, lay down and slept, and he slept soundly. He had been under heavy strain, both physical and mental, and nature was bound to have her due. Perhaps also he had come to the conclusion that this missionary was

not such a babe, after all, and that he did not need such constant protection as he had at first thought.

During the night a four-and-a-half foot rattle-snake came up out of the prairie grass, and apparently taking the sleeping Three Arrows for a nice warm log, crawled up on him and coiled itself comfortably upon his breast. When Mr. Rundle opened his eyes in the morning he saw this snake, with its tail up and head up also. He also saw Three Arrows' eyelids move almost imperceptibly, and was sure that he was awake and realized his danger. Indeed in the very act of awakening, the sleeper may have roused the snake, and hence its lifted head looking keenly for trouble.

Mr. Rundle thought quickly, looked cautiously around, and silently, with the least possible movement, secured Three Arrows' gun. To use a loaded gun as a club he knew would be the height of folly. To shoot at a snake on a man's breast was considerable risk. But as the angry snake's head now towered a foot and a half or more above the youth's body, he thought a shot safe enough; if he missed, he could then use the empty gun to knock the snake off. So he took careful aim and fired. The shot hit the snake in the neck, cutting the head neatly off.

Three Arrows sprang up, flashed a look of grati-

tude at the missionary, and then looked carefully around their sleeping place and that of the horses. Having satisfied himself that no more snakes were about, he came back to Mr. Rundle. "One true shot," he said, pointing out that the bullet had hit the snake's neck squarely.

"I never saw a rattlesnake before," Mr. Rundle said, "but I have heard much of them since I have come to this country. But come now, tell me how you saved me and my horse the first night."

Three Arrows told him what he had seen when he came up to him, and how he had chased away the thieves and cutthroats.

"Well, Three Arrows," said Mr. Rundle, "after thinking the matter over, I am inclined to believe you will learn your letters and be reading your Bible long before I master the art of living in a wild land. Your coming to me has been a godsend."

"You acted rightly and quickly about the snake," said Three Arrows, his eyes full of gratitude. "No man could have done it better."

They then had their breakfast, despatched a buffalo tongue with good relish, and after a short Bible lesson and prayer, mounted their horses and rode over the prairie. They had no further special adventures, and on the third day entered the Hudson's Bay Company's trading post, Fort Edmonton, where

they were cordially welcomed by the chief factor, Mr. Rowland.

"I thought you were lost," said the chief factor to Mr. Rundle.

"I should have been, if it had not been for this young man," said Mr. Rundle. "It is the old saying, 'God takes care of babes and innocents,' so this guardian angel was sent to me."

"He shot a snake off me as I was lying asleep," said Three Arrows, pulling the snake's rattles out of his pocket and showing them to Mr. Rowland. "He hit it in the neck."

"Another William Tell!" exclaimed the chief factor merrily. "I did not know you were a crack shot, Rundle."

"At ten feet, who couldn't hit a thing like that?" said Mr. Rundle.

"A snake's neck is neither a big nor a steady target, even at ten feet," Mr. Rowland declared.

"And now," said Mr. Rundle, taking out Mr. Rankin's letter, "read that letter. Three Arrows brought it to me from Mr. Rankin."

"This is certainly a fine recommendation," said Mr. Rowland after he had read it, "and I am very glad to see this young man and his horse, although perhaps," he added with a smile, "not for the same reason that you were." Then turning to the young

Indian he said, "I am glad to welcome you to my fort. You are the young man who won the great race at Fort Garry, are you not?"

"I am," said Three Arrows simply.

"And that is the horse you rode?" inquired the chief factor.

"It is," said Three Arrows, beginning to feel uncomfortable. He did not wish Whirlwind's prowess to be too well known in this new place, for then she would be coveted by many, and as he had now other ambitions, he could not always be guarding her.

"I didn't think trader Rankin would part with either of you," said Mr. Rowland.

"One big reason was," said Three Arrows, looking straight at the chief factor, "that I might learn good of this man. Another reason was that I may visit the Indian bands with him."

"This young man is still in Mr. Rankin's pay," explained Mr. Rundle, "and his one ambition just now is to learn to read the Bible."

"Good," said the factor, but with some indifference, as though the subject of main interest to him had been dropped. "He will be your first pupil and help you to organize a school, to which I shall send all the children of the fort. But I can tell you that I should have been glad in any case to have retained that horse and that young man here, if the accounts

I have heard of them are true. We shall hope to see some of their good work."

"I have seen it already," declared Mr. Rundle. "It is because of the cleverness of both of them that I have been returned to you alive." He then told of their experience with the stampeding buffalo.

"That makes me even more eager to see with my own eyes what they can do," said the big chief factor.

He had not long to wait. But in the meantime the idea of a school in the fort was taken up seriously by Mr. Rundle and carried into speedy effect. A room in a storehouse was cleared out and fitted with benches for a temporary schoolroom until a suitable building could be built. With his Bible, a few Testaments and hymnbooks, and an English spelling-book, the missionary set to work to teach the first steps in education to his pupils—ten young Indians and the six children of the factor and his clerks. Three Arrows also attended the school, and his determination to master reading, and his single-mindedness, were a great help to Mr. Rundle in holding the attention and awaking the interest of the other pupils. In fact, some of the Indian boys appealed to Three Arrows to teach them what he had learned, and he proved an apt instructor. This also helped him to get a better grip upon the principles of reading. Mr. Rundle, quick to take advantage of his ability, gave him

private lessons, and soon, going over with him the simple lessons, he gave the younger children into the care of Three Arrows, while he dealt with the older and more advanced pupils.

Fort Edmonton was the center of a great deal of trading for many different tribes; Wood Crees, Plains Crees, Blackfeet, Stonies, Piegan, Bloods, and various others came there, sometimes in large bands. Three Arrows met every band that came in, and as far as he dared he mingled with them, searching the faces of the women to see if he could find his dear sister Omeme or his beloved Wanda. Mr. Rundle also visited the bands and spoke to them through interpreters. Most of the chiefs were impressed by his words, and perhaps more by the way the Company's officials spoke of the man himself. They earnestly invited him to visit them in their own home country, and the missionary promised them that he would.

XIII

ADVENTURE ON THE PLAINS

MR. RUNDLE was eager to be away visiting and preaching the gospel to the different tribes which had invited him; but now that he had opened a school, he must provide for it and see that its work was carried on. Yet the only person who was in any way ready to help him was Three Arrows, whom he would have at his side when he had to set out across unmapped plains, beset, as he had already learned, with all manner of dangers. He sought to find another pupil equally eager to learn and equally progressive. In the meantime he gave Three Arrows every assistance at mastering reading and writing and such other branches of learning as arithmetic and geography.

On his part, Three Arrows was quick to take advantage of his surroundings. As he mingled with the different bands that came in, he learned their tongues and dialects. He could then tell them about the Book of Life that the strange little white man had brought, for many chiefs and headmen wanted to know what this white man's business in the land was, seeing that

he was not interested in trading. Three Arrows was ready to explain to them, and to read to them out of the Book. This made them more eager to have Mr. Rundle visit them and talk to their tribes.

Mr. Rowland was impressed with the eloquent way in which Three Arrows addressed these visiting Indians. "That fellow has spoken in council," said the factor, "and he will be one of their best orators some day."

"Perhaps he will be something better than that," Mr. Rundle replied.

"What?" asked the factor.

"An Indian missionary and preacher," Mr. Rundle answered, but the factor did not show any enthusiasm over this suggestion. In fact, if he had spoken his thoughts he would have told the missionary that that would mean the spoiling of a good buffalo runner, provided the accounts he had heard of Three Arrows proved to be true. So the missionary did not press the matter.

Besides all his other work, Three Arrows had Mr. Rundle out for a saddle ride nearly every day. Often Mr. Rowland joined them. He wished to see Three Arrows and Whirlwind show off a little, but this was what Three Arrows was careful not to do. He took a few turns by way of practice and to keep Whirlwind in good condition, but his chief concern was to teach

Mr. Rundle how to ride and how to take care of himself when he had to go on a missionary journey to the outlying Indian bands.

But there was a day when he and Mr. Rundle and Mr. Rowland had an experience that they would long remember. In their ride they came upon a large herd of buffalo, and Mr. Rowland told Three Arrows to shoot a few young cows to provide fresh meat for the fort. Three Arrows, on his beloved Whirlwind, dashed into the herd and jockeyed around until he found the kind of animals that yielded the choicest meat obtainable on the plains. After he had shot three, he saw a scene that nearly made his heart stand still, cool a man as he was.

Several buffalo bulls, evidently on guard at the outskirts of the herd, had become aroused by the presence of the two horsemen standing there looking at the herd, and had charged the men, whose horses, thus suddenly attacked, had bolted. In the sudden action of his mount Mr. Rundle had been dismounted, and was now running after his horse, with a buffalo chasing him. Mr. Rowland had tried to check his horse's mad rush and thus had allowed a buffalo bull to overtake him. The bull was now running alongside the horse, trying to gore it.

With remarkable speed Three Arrows disengaged himself from the herd that seemed almost to hedge

him in; then, like a bolt of lightning, Whirlwind had taken him to the side of Mr. Rowland just at the moment that his horse was thrown and its rider sent sprawling on the plains. The young Indian sent an arrow which dropped the buffalo beside the horse, then he whirled and dashed after the buffalo that was overtaking Mr. Rundle. When he was within range, Three Arrows sent an arrow that checked the buffalo's speed and caused him to wobble, but the mad creature struggled on, determined to get his quarry. In a few seconds Three Arrows closed on him and shot another arrow that made him sink to the plains. It was none too soon, for Mr. Rundle put his foot into a hole that had been made by a prairie dog, and went tumbling to the ground. Three Arrows was at his side in a moment and helped him up and on to the back of Whirlwind in front of himself; in this way they sped over the plains and caught Mr. Rundle's horse. Then the two men rode to Mr. Rowland's help. His wounded mount had been pinned to the ground by the big buffalo, which lay on two of the horse's legs.

The two men swung off their horses. "Hold the lariats," said Three Arrows to Mr. Rundle as he handed him the long rawhide line, one end of which was around Whirlwind's neck, and picked up the lariat of Mr. Rowland's horse. "Hold tight and don't

let a line drop," he added in warning; then to Mr. Rowland, "You take a leg of the buffalo and we'll pull together and get the horse free."

The plucky little horse, wounded as it was, as soon as it was free of the buffalo sprang to its feet, made a jerk on the line in Mr. Rundle's hand, and would have dashed away if Three Arrows had not come quickly and helped him to hold it.

"My boy, I saw all you did today," said Mr. Rowland later to Three Arrows. "It was well done, and quickly and wisely calculated. But how did you get out of the herd in time to save us? That is the one thing I did not see, and I have been trying to figure it out."

"It was mostly Whirlwind," said Three Arrows, patting his horse's neck and smiling, well pleased at Mr. Rowland's praise.

"No, no," said Mr. Rowland. "The horse is quick and clever, but it was the man on her back who saw or made his way out. It is one great pity for you to be wasting your time bungling over books, Three Arrows, when you can do feats like that. You ought to be employed on our transport."

"Come, come now," said Mr. Rundle, good-naturedly, "you are no sport at all to try to rob me of Three Arrows just because he has saved the life of your horse and perhaps all our lives as well! Re-

member, friend, there are more things in this world than just buying furs and getting them to market."

"I'll give him the best wages in the service if he will come with us," said Mr. Rowland stubbornly.

"Wisdom is better than riches," declared Mr. Rundle. "Gold and rubies are not to be compared with her. 'He that winneth souls is wise, and he that turneth many to righteousness shall one day shine as the stars in heaven.' Your best wages cannot equal that."

"Three Arrows is your man," said Mr. Rowland, relaxing in his argument, "but you are spoiling the best buffalo runner in the country, and the quickest and surest mind for avoiding and getting out of trouble that I have seen on these plains. He would be a jewel in any transport train."

"That is just the kind of man we want to guide souls in the transport train to the kingdom of heaven," said Mr. Rundle.

Three Arrows followed the discussion with the keenest of interest. It thrilled him to hear the little man stand up to the big, domineering trader who had always been used to having his every whim fulfilled. The missionary could hold his own in debate, and above all he could be sweet and smiling as he did so. There was no loud talking or appeal to force. But there was spirit in abundance, and the flash of wit,

and the prompt application of truth, and the claim of the larger vision.

"Mr. Rundle is one great man, even if he can't ride a horse," said Three Arrows to himself. "I must teach him to do that, and he will be great in every way."

Mr. Rowland could not resist the temptation to renew his offer to the young Indian to join the service. "You are a big man and kind and generous like trader Rankin," was Three Arrows' answer, "but just now I stay with Mr. Rundle."

Three Arrows said his little speech with so much importance and spirit that it appealed to Mr. Rowland's good sense and humor. He wanted to laugh outright and shout, "Bully for you, boy! You have wit and wisdom, and plenty of conceit, too!" but he checked himself, thinking that such conduct would be undignified in a Hudson's Bay officer. So he simply dismissed the matter with, "All right, young man, I'll see you again about it."

The work at the fort began to assume a routine character. There was school work every day, horse-back riding every afternoon, and private lessons and religious worship every morning and evening. On Sundays in the morning a service was held in English for the white people of the fort and for such

Indians as wished to join with them. There was a service in their own language for the Indians in the afternoon, and sometimes another service in the evening. With the assistance of Mr. Rundle, Three Arrows was making all possible progress with the few books at his command; but what the young man lacked in breadth, Mr. Rundle saw that he made up in depth and height. For Three Arrows became an earnest follower of Jesus Christ, and a diligent student of the Book. He desired to think as Jesus thought and to live as Jesus lived, and Mr. Rundle was only too happy to strengthen that aspiration.

Three Arrows was now a very different young man from the one Mr. Rankin had sent away. Even Mr. Rowland was made to appreciate the improvement in his character and intelligence. Yet he was still the clever horseman, buffalo runner and maker of trails. His Christianity did not alter his gifts, it simply transformed his character. It made him strong in love of his fellows, wishing them only that which was good. It made him earnest in persuading them to put away the stealing and killing, trickery and treachery, which destroy life. Yet as he joined the missionary in his service and pleaded with other Indians to walk in the new way, he found how stubborn a hold the old life had upon them. He saw that it was one thing to listen to a good man proclaim the truth, and

quite another thing to get the people to accept the truth and put it into practice.

Though he had plenty of work to do at Fort Edmonton, Mr. Rundle remembered his promises to visit the scattered tribes on the plains, and he was eager to set out. Winter had rolled its mantle of cold and snow over the prairies, and Christmas had been celebrated with much feasting. Then Mr. Rundle determined to start. The pupils of the school would have a short holiday while he and Three Arrows visited the Indians around Rocky Mountain House. So, with a train of four dogs and a cariole, a great toboggan with buffalo skin sides, the two friends set out over the plains.

After traveling hard for five days, camping each night in the open, glad if they could find a coulee or a sheltering snowbank, they came to Rocky Mountain House, where the Hudson's Bay Company had another trading establishment. The trader here, Mr. Harriett, received Mr. Rundle with great kindness and rendered him every assistance in his power. It was soon noised amongst the Indians who traded at the post that "the man who talked to the Great Spirit" was in their midst, and they prepared to receive him with great pomp and ceremony. The chiefs and their warriors presented themselves, decorated gaily with beads, porcupine quills, and various orna-

ments which showed the skilful needlework of the women and other artificers. All expressed their pleasure at meeting the missionary and shook hands with him, some even kissing him and stroking his clothes and hair. Some gave him their left hand to shake, saying it was nearest to the heart.

Mr. Rundle preached to them wherever he could; sometimes in the chief's great tent, or in the open when the weather was not too severe. He proclaimed the gospel with all the eloquence and earnestness that he possessed, and followed up his preaching by talking to the people in their own tents. He found at Rocky Mountain House an even larger number of Indians than at Edmonton, and more noted and powerful chiefs. Rocky Mountain House had been hard for the traders to maintain, because of the warring of the Indians in the neighborhood. Rum was easily procured from southern traders and it was working havoc, or rather it was increasing the havoc wrought by native passions.

Mr. Rundle met hundreds of Blackfoot warriors, and they impressed him by their stature and intelligence. "I felt the insignificance of my stature," he wrote to his friends in England, "in comparison with these tall sons of the plains." But the evil reputation of these Indians was as great as their size; they were known as "the terrible Indians" of the plains. Their

reputation, however, did not prevent Mr. Rundle from accepting an invitation to visit their large camp on the Bow River.

Three Arrows was also eager to pay this visit. He knew that these Blackfeet were the hereditary enemies of the Cree nation, and that they had taken many women as slaves and concubines. The hope of finding his loved ones in this camp was strong in his heart.

XIV

IN THE ENEMY CAMP

MR. RUNDLE's reception at the Blackfoot camp was a notable ceremony, worthy, we might say, of the man and of his mission. Two chiefs came to the Cree camp and escorted him on his way. A horse was provided for him, and the principal chiefs walked abreast when they received him, and they were followed by all their people. He was thus ushered into the head chief's lodge, where he was to have his home. This lodge was constructed of twenty-six buffalo hides, and the interior, lined with robes, was large enough to hold a hundred people. The chief was a great warrior, had seven wives, and his authority amongst the Blackfeet was supreme.

In this camp Mr. Rundle did as he had done in other camps. He preached morning, afternoon, and evening, and such time as he had in between he spent in visiting the Indian lodges, teaching all who would listen, and expounding to them the way of life. The different chiefs sought to entertain him, and if he would not leave the lodge into which he had first entered for their own, he had at least to share a

feast with them, after which there was much free conversation and the asking and answering of questions.

The different bands of Indians seemed to try to outdo one another in welcoming their guest. When he entered the Stoney Indian camp, all the people, with their chief at their head, came out in a procession to greet him. One hundred and sixty persons, well-horsed, painted and decorated, passed by him as he sat on horseback, and shook hands with him. He was then led to a large tent that had been prepared for the holding of services. It had been roofed with skins, and the floor covered with pine brush and buffalo robes. Here he was fed on the dainties of the land—pemmican, buffalo tongues, prairie turnips and berry soup. He remained in this camp nearly two weeks, preaching and teaching the people from morning until night; and that was about the length of time he gave to each important camp.

But this unique welcome of Mr. Rundle did not mean that the Indians accepted the gospel or its teaching. In some places the missionary did not get far in his presentation before there were signs of dissent and disapproval. Because of the character and reputation of the man, the welcome extended to him by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the patronage of the chiefs, there was no open mani-

festation of disapproval while he was in the camp. When some of the disaffected warriors felt themselves strong enough, they quietly gathered up their arms and robes and withdrew from the preaching service or the speaker's company, just as Chief Two Horses, the father of Three Arrows, and his men had done at Mr. Rankin's trading post.

After Mr. Rundle had left, his message was put to the test around the council fires of the Indians. It was then that the opponents showed the chiefs what this teaching meant: the old roving free life on the plains would end; warriors would become women and let their enemies trample on them. Revenge was wrong; scalping was wrong; war was wrong; stealing horses was wrong; if these preachings went on, what call was there for braves, for warriors, for real men?

Big Wolf, a Blood Indian chief, one of the most influential leaders not only amongst his own people and the great Blackfoot nation but in the whole plains district, sent word to Mr. Rundle that he was to refrain, in his sermons and talks hereafter, from speaking against taking revenge on one's enemies, and the common practice amongst warriors of sacrificing their fingers to the sun; the Indians, he declared, refused to become women, and the sacrificing of fingers brought good luck in war.

With only Three Arrows as a companion, Mr.

Rundle hastened to the camp of Big Wolf, entered his tent and confronted him. Great, tall, well-armed warriors surrounded the chief, and at a word from him would have been pleased to destroy this little man, this preacher of a doctrine of peace, fit, as their orators at the council had said, only for women and dogs. But Big Wolf appreciated a brave man when he saw him, and he chose to hear what he had to say. Big Wolf also prided himself upon his ability to talk down his opponents, and now told Mr. Rundle to his face what he thought of him and his doctrine.

Opening his Bible, Mr. Rundle held it boldly before the chief. "There," said he, "is the Book of Life open to you. It tells you what you are, and how you can live at peace with the God who made heaven and earth. It tells you clearly and plainly how to treat your fellow men, who are as precious in God's sight as you are; and how you are to live as sons of the heavenly Father in helpfulness, peace, and love with one another. The book is open to you; you may learn to read for yourself and go the way of light and life. But no, you will not learn; you will listen to the old spirit of evil that has cursed you and filled your beautiful prairies with fear and terror, with anger, revenge and death. You shut the book," and he closed the Bible with a snap, "you defy God."

"I am defying only you," said Chief Big Wolf.

"No, you are not," said the little missionary, stooping down and picking up a little earth from the floor of the tent. "Who am I? I am but one of hundreds, one of myriads of men. You could put me away like that," and he blew the dust from his hand. "But you cannot deal with God that way. His sun will shine tomorrow, whatever you may do today. His storm will sweep over the prairie, and all the big chiefs in the land cannot stop it. And now you declare you do not want to hear what God says. To whom are you listening? To the men who bring in the firewaters that tangle up the legs of your warriors so that they cannot walk straight, that befuddle their brains so that they babble like foolish infants? Are you listening to men who speak war, the war that is sending you out to destroy one another, so that soon these beautiful plains and shining foothills which should be the dwelling place of happy children of God, of Indians favored of the Great Spirit, shall be swept clean by your rage, anger and cruelties, and the land given over to people of other races and color? Is this book to stay closed, chief? Or shall I open it and teach you and your people the way of peace, the way to God?"

"Go your way," replied the chief. "Go your way, and no one will molest you."

Three Arrows almost smiled, dignified, imper-

turbable as he was, as he saw how the fire fled from the eyes of the Indian warriors who stood in that tent, saw their guns sink out of sight, and the silent tribute of respect they paid to the brave little man who had faced them and tongue-thrashed their great chief, and through him every one of themselves. More and more Three Arrows adored the little missionary, not only for his abiding love for the Indians, his unflagging zeal to do them good, and his single-minded ambition to lead them into the way of life, but for that which was dear to the Indians themselves—his courage, his will power, and his overwhelming eloquence.

But in the midst of his admiration of his companion and his joy at his notable triumph, he saw something that nearly overthrew his own superb poise. In the excitement of the interview some of Big Wolf's women, with uncovered heads, pressed into the inner ring, listening breathlessly to the thrilling debate. One face fascinated Three Arrows. Again and again he found himself gazing upon it, and at the conclusion of the chief's peaceful dismissal, the woman's eyes fell full upon his own and remained there. Discovery, amazement, alarm, were all registered in the swift signs passed between the two.

That night two heavily blanketed Indians left the

camp and wandered out on the plains until they felt themselves absolutely alone.

"Omeme!" cried Three Arrows, his whole soul in the word as he seized his sister's hand.

"Three Arrows!" she answered him. "How ever did you get here? If Big Wolf knows that you are here, he will kill you."

"I know that," said Three Arrows, "but I am not here as a Cree warrior, Omeme. I am here as guide to the missionary. I am his man, and I walk in his way. But never mind me; tell me about how you came here. And where is Wanda?"

"We were both carried away in that awful raid upon our camp," said Omeme. "Big Wolf came upon the men who captured us, and taking a fancy to me, claimed me for his own. Wanda was sold to a young trader who took her away to the white man's land, where she was to be trained to be a white man's wife. I never saw her, except for a few minutes, after the white man bought her."

The heart of Three Arrows, that had leaped for joy at discovering his sister, now sank to despair as he heard of the fate of his sweetheart. "Never again shall we see her," he said.

"We know not," said Omeme. "Perhaps the white man will be sent back to be a trader at some post that we can visit."

"They have many posts, those white traders," said Three Arrows in despair.

"Now we must go back, my brother," said Omeme, "or I shall be missed—I said that I was going for water. If they come after me and find you, it will go hard with you. I must keep close to Big Wolf and make sure that he does not find you out and kill you; for I see that you are a man of peace now and have no thoughts to kill him."

She said this with some resentment, for Omeme was still a pagan Indian at heart. Three Arrows winced at her slighting reference to his changed spirit, but he caught at the new note in her voice and manner.

"Then you have heard of the new way of peace; you have listened to the missionary," he exclaimed.

"We women move up to hear him whenever we can, although Big Wolf would have his warriors drive us away; he does not want us to hear him, any more than he does the men. I hate Big Wolf, Three Arrows! He is so cruel, so tyrannical, so bloodthirsty. He killed with his own hands the only child I ever had. I wanted to save him as your mother saved you." (Although Omeme was only a half-sister to Three Arrows, they could not have loved each other more.) "He had one little foot, as you had, but was otherwise perfect. But when I had persuaded

the others, the chief stalked into the tent and took up the babe. Oh, how I loved it and longed for it! 'No good,' he said, 'you shall never raise a child like this.' And he strangled it before my eyes. 'I shall never raise another child,' I shrieked at him; and I never have. I could kill him, and yet I am his favorite wife."

They talked swiftly and quietly for a moment longer; then Omeme filled her buffalo-skin bucket at a water-hole and they hastened back to camp. She pointed out to Three Arrows the lodge in which the missionary was a guest, and hastened away to her own.

The manner in which Mr. Runcle dealt with Big Wolf was the way in which he faced and met the rising tide of opposition to his message in other Indian tribes. He faced Crooked Arm, chief of the Crees, and persuaded him not only to cease active opposition, but to make it possible for his people to have the gospel preached to them. In order to meet the different Indian bands so widely scattered over the plains, Mr. Rundle had to travel constantly, by horse when he could, by dog-train when the snow and the cold compelled him. Because he had to be away from Fort Edmonton so much, he finally established Three Arrows as the teacher there, and bade

him do his best for the pupils. Three Arrows was not sorry at this arrangement. He saw now that there was no special advantage to him in visiting the different tribes. His one hope of ever seeing Wanda again was in the coming of the trader who had bought her for his wife, and the trading post was the place that he would visit. Three Arrows threw himself into his work and did his best with the means at his disposal.

Mr. Rundle went from band to band and spent a week or two with each. He taught the Indians as well as he could to read the Bible. He also gathered the children together and tried to teach them to sing. But at best the work was very unsatisfactory, and he began to think of gathering into separate villages those Indians who had accepted the gospel, and of arranging a more permanent schooling for them.

He made his first experiment at Pigeon Lake, which was situated in surroundings of surpassing beauty. Here was a great lake to assure the villagers of a constant food supply by way of fish; around were the great plains with their provisions of deer and buffalo; and not far off were the foothills, with their streams and fur-bearing animals. Thus if the Indians refused to begin seriously to till the soil, they would still find the means of life all around

them. Into this place Mr. Rundle gathered the converts from several tribes, organized a village there, and placed Three Arrows for a while in charge. But he had other men in training, among the most useful being Ben Sinclair, Stephen Kecheyees, and Kischeepowat.

Kischeepowat became one of the missionary's constant companions and guides after Three Arrows was promoted to the responsibility of a mission teacher. With him Mr. Rundle climbed a mountain in the vicinity of Banff that is over ninety-five hundred feet high. It is now known as Mount Rundle, a standing monument not only to the intrepid man who first climbed it, but to the missionary who first preached the gospel in that region. Like Three Arrows and other men who labored with Mr. Rundle, Kischeepowat came to regard him as the most wonderful of men. He was always doing such great things—nothing seemed impossible to him.

"Except horseback riding," the missionary was wont to say, smiling.

"But you ride well," declared Kischeepowat.

"What I can do in the way of riding I owe to Three Arrows," said Mr. Rundle cheerfully. "He thought that I would never learn to stick on a horse." And he laughed merrily as he thought of his early attempts to master the rider's art. But as Kis-

cheepowat knew nothing of those days, and only knew Mr. Rundle as a horseman almost as good as he was himself, he did not see anything to laugh at or to diminish the standing of the missionary in his eyes.

But this incessant traveling, teaching and preaching, this meeting with warlike chiefs and haranguing them in council and out, told upon the missionary, strong of body and stout of heart as he was. After eight years of work he broke down, and the kind Hudson's Bay officers sent him home to England. He thought that his absence would be only temporary. He made plans to return, and pleaded with his men to carry on until he returned. "If I do not come back," he declared, "God will send you another missionary."

It was with a feeling of dismay that Three Arrows, Sinclair, and the other Indian helpers saw their master depart. They knew his unique power over the evil and opposing forces in the land, and they feared for the future of the work begun. There was no one to take his place. And they were right. Mr. Rundle on his way home could not have reached Norway House before there were rumblings of war and trouble for the converts. Then, too, the traders seemed to feel a relief at the departure of the determined and righteous little missionary whose faith and zeal held

them and held their devices for mulcting the Indians of furs in constant check.

Mr. Rowland in particular was glad to see him go. He thought the missionary work would soon be broken up, and he would then be able to induce Three Arrows to enter his employ.

XV

THE DEFEAT OF CHIEF BIG WOLF

"IF I go back into the service," said Three Arrows, his eyes looking very straight into Mr. Rowland's, "I go back to Mr. Rankin." He spoke in such a manner that he made the factor feel as though he were acting like a sheep-stealer. "Mr. Rundle told me to carry on until another missionary comes," Three Arrows added, with a dignity and finality that made Mr. Rowland realize that he was in the presence of a man of leadership, decision and princely bearing. He felt that he should rise and bow to this new leader, but with hard effort, not to say bad grace, he maintained his seat. In that way Three Arrows left him.

Mr. Rankin also had thought that he might get Three Arrows back on his staff, and he hastened to Edmonton. When he told Mr. Rowland his errand, the latter laughed. "I tried to get him for myself," he said, "but the mantle of Moses has fallen on Joshua. Although he has no backing, he is ready to face the world and the wide plains full of warring tribes with only his trust in God and his own re-

sources. He says that Mr. Rundle has told him to take care of his converts and carry on until another missionary arrives."

"And he will," said Mr. Rankin with enthusiasm. "He'll win out, too."

"Why don't you go down and join him?" asked Mr. Rowland sarcastically. "Perhaps you could take Rundle's place."

"I would to God that I were good enough," said Mr. Rankin seriously. "But where is Three Arrows now, and what is he doing?"

"He is in charge of the Christian village at Pigeon Lake," was the reply.

"If I were here," said Mr. Rankin, "I'd have him near me and bid him establish his Christian village."

"And have the pagans down on us like howling wolves after a flock of sheep," exclaimed factor Rowland. "Not I! Those Rundle Christians refuse to fight, and the chiefs are enraged at every brave who joins them. The pagans will be after them one of these days; then you'll see the Christians snuffed out like that," and he snapped his fingers.

Mr. Rowland was a terribly true prophet in saying that the pagans would attack and try to wipe out the little Christian village at Pigeon Lake. Beautiful as it was, and so naturally fitted to be the abode of a happy, industrious and peaceful people, it was the

center of a land of jealous, proud, and war-loving tribes into whose customs and practices were now introduced the use of the white man's rum and other destructive vices. Even while the white traders were talking to each other in the fort at Edmonton, a terrible tragedy had taken place. Ben Sinclair and some of the Christian Indians were out on the plains, hunting buffalo to replenish the meat supply of the village, when they were attacked by a party of Blood Indians under the leadership of Big Wolf. Several of them were killed, and the others fled to the village.

Three Arrows roused all the people, bade them pack as quickly as they could, taking only what was absolutely necessary, and flee to the foothills. He divided them into four bands, placing Ben Sinclair, Kecheyees and Kischeepowat each in charge of one and keeping the fourth under his own care. Under cover of the darkness all four bands stole out over the plains and hastened to hide themselves in the ravines of the foothills. The next morning at the blush of dawn the gathered warriors of the Blackfoot nations, Bloods and Sarcees, swooped down upon the lodges at Pigeon Lake, but not a soul did they find.

Big Wolf was wild with rage at losing his prey. He had had the experience of having several of his braves join the Christians. He had ordered them

back into his band, but they had told him that they had become Christians and with the Christians they would stay. Hence the chief's attack upon the buffalo hunters and the village. Now Big Wolf vowed that not only would he get back his own braves and scalp them before their tribe as deserters, but he would wipe the Christians from the land.

So he eagerly followed the villagers. Several times at nightfall, after trailing them all day, he thought they were in his hands, but when the morning came they had again escaped. The chief and his men were well horsed and could move with great speed and mobility; but clever and swift as Big Wolf was, he was constantly outwitted.

"The white man has gone," thundered Big Wolf. "Who is there in that camp who tells them everything we do and say, and when and where we plan to strike? Who is their leader?"

"The boy who learned to pray from his white master," was the answer, "the young man who stood with him in your presence."

"The brave that brings me his scalp I'll make a chief, and he shall have the first choice of the young squaws of the village," declared Big Wolf.

The Christian bands were now driven from valley to valley and fled farther up into the ravines, the determined warriors giving them no rest. But, har-

ried and pursued as they were, they were always successful in eluding capture. Big Wolf and his men came to think that Three Arrows was possessed of occult powers. No one thought of suspecting the beautiful, devoted, favorite wife whom Big Wolf kept at his side. The sister of Three Arrows was faithful in Big Wolf's tent. If she ever went forth, it was for water or firewood. No tent was kept better than his.

One night Big Wolf with his men camped by a wonderfully beautiful river. He knew that he must be near the fleeing Christians, but he did not know that Three Arrows, with his weak and exhausted band—the aged, the children, and the sick being unable to travel any further—was just across that stream. If the chief had crossed that evening, he must surely have caught the refugees and killed or captured them. But he and his men camped on their side of the stream.

The moon rose that night with silvery clearness. The great mountains with their snow-capped tops rose in majestic grandeur above the timber line, above the foothills, their height, their number, and their glory seemingly illimitable. The more distant mountains looked like silver pillars holding up the deep blue skies. Chief Big Wolf had never before been so far into the hills, and he was deeply im-

pressed with the grandeur of the scene. He walked along the side of the noisy river whose broken waters, dancing under the moonbeams, charmed him with bright visions. Deep, dark woods were behind him and before him, the heavily timbered ravines swept away from his right hand, with the plains beyond. But it was the mountains that filled his soul with awe that night, and he desired to see more and more of them. He clambered over rocks and up beside the rushing stream, whose sudden and graceful curves brought still more wondrous visions.

Big Wolf climbed a large rock at the side of the stream to get a more commanding view of all this beauty, his great form, gracefully poised, looking like a graven statue in the moonlight. Then from the woods behind him a figure crept noiselessly to the rock on which he was standing, and with almost Herculean strength tilted it and sent it crashing over the edge of the bank. The very moment he felt the rock move, the chief leaped. He cleared the rock, but fell into the deep and turbulent waters. Now Big Wolf was an Indian from the plains and was therefore no swimmer. He buffeted the choking waters bravely and desperately, but the flood played with him as it would with a broken stick or a bit of foam.

On the other side of the river, carefully concealed, was Three Arrows, keeping sharp watch against any

surprise on the part of the enemy. He saw the Indian fall from the rock, but in the distance did not recognize him. As the struggling form was carried toward him, Three Arrows plunged into the stream, caught the man, and, battling heroically with the current, dragged him to shore. He was astonished then to find that the man he had pulled out of the water was the great chief of the Bloods, his arch enemy. Even then, by just leaving him alone, Three Arrows knew that he could be sure of the chief's death and his own escape. But that was not now the spirit of Three Arrows. For a long time he worked faithfully over Big Wolf, and finally saw him regain consciousness.

"Who are you?" demanded Big Wolf, gasping for breath.

"One who wishes to be at peace with his fellows," replied Three Arrows; "one who wishes the blessings of peace and life, not anger and death, to all Indians on the plains."

"Now I know you, young man," said Big Wolf quickly. "You are the friend of the white prophet, and his spirit dwells in you."

"If any of our people at Pigeon Lake have hurt you," said Three Arrows, "let me know and we shall recompense you. If any are worthy of death, take me and shoot me and let the others go. Surely you will

give me their lives, now that I have given you yours."

"Young man," said Big Wolf, "you have the tongue and spirit of your master, and you have the cleverness of the best of Indians. No ordinary Indian could outwit us so persistently as you have done. Your medicine is as great in the waters as it is on the land. Big Wolf will not molest you again."

Three Arrows helped Big Wolf across the ford and called for the chief's men to help. The warriors, amazed to see the plight of their chief, were full of inquiries, but Big Wolf simply held his hand up for them to be silent.

"Just one request in parting," said Three Arrows. "When we fled from the plains we had to leave much behind us. There is among the horses an old brown mare. She is not of any value to you, but she has been of much value to me. As a personal favor, let her be returned to me."

"Let it be as you say, young man, and more," said the chief magnanimously. "Everything that my men have taken that belongs to you or to your people shall be returned. I shall put to death the man who keeps so much as a moccasin that is yours, for I shall look upon it as the ransom of my life." Then Big Wolf and his men broke camp and retreated down the ravine.

As the sun broke over the woods, the scene about

the river was so peaceful that singing birds were heard above the sound of the waters. Three Arrows could only think of what a different scene might have been enacted, and what cries and screams might have filled the morning, at that same spot. He knew that Big Wolf was a man of his word and that it was woe to any man who dared to disobey him.

When Big Wolf and his picked warriors came out of the ravines to the plains, they met the rest of the band with their horses, and the captured horses and other loot that they had taken. Here Three Arrows saw his beloved Whirlwind and her colt again. He wished to run to her and throw his arms about her neck, but he was now the leader of a band of Indians and had the status of a chief, so he had to act in a dignified way and restrain his affection.

After the stolen horses and loot had been returned, Three Arrows was surprised by Big Wolf, for in front of all his people the chief stepped up to him, gripped his hand, and shook it heartily.

"You are a good young man, like your master," said the chief, looking straight at Three Arrows. He did not have to look down, as he would have had to do if he had been speaking to Mr. Rundle. His keen glance swept Three Arrows from head to foot in admiration. "Your master was a great man. There was no chief like him. He had great medicine. You

have learned much from him. I wish I had warriors like you," he added with grave sincerity.

"There is no greater chief on the plains than Chief Big Wolf," said Three Arrows, just as sincerely; "and no better man, if he would but learn to walk in the way of the Book of Life."

Three Arrows and his people were glad to regain possession of their horses and so many of their other lost things, but they knew it would be dangerous to return to Pigeon Lake—it would only provoke others to attack them. So they went back into the foothills and wintered there. The next summer, while they sought to kill buffalo, they were attacked by a band of pagan Indians but escaped with their lives. This proved to Three Arrows the necessity of getting farther out of that part of the country, and he moved steadily northward, seeking a new home for his persecuted people.

In all their troubles, Three Arrows never forgot to call his people regularly to prayer. It was his first duty when morning dawned, and when the day was over and the people gathered around the campfires, he would lead them in the singing of hymns that had been translated into the Cree language. Then he would read to them from the Bible and call upon them to remember what Mr. Rundle had told them. His three lieutenants also spoke to the people and

supported their leader in his endeavor to encourage and sustain the spirit of the band.

Three Arrows was also diligent in teaching the children to read the Bible. The few copies that he had were getting woefully worn, and so he taught them to cultivate their memories. In this way some of the children were able to repeat whole chapters of the Bible, and they found the exercise one of delight. As these young people recited the scriptures at the campfire, the people praised God and rejoiced. Though living the lives of the hunted, snatching a precarious subsistence from land and river, fearful even of visiting the trading posts where the pagan Indians congregated, the Christian Indians could yet think of God, repeat his great words to them, and in the hidden valleys sing his praises.

XVI

THREE ARROWS LEADS HIS PEOPLE

But winter followed summer, and summer winter, and no missionary came to the western land. Three Arrows knew no relaxing in guarding his people, in feeding them, in watching over them. They trusted him as their guide and guardian, their teacher and leader. They loved him, and no one even for a moment disputed his leadership or questioned his judgment, he was so wise and unselfish, and withal so quick and shrewd and sure. They wanted to make him their chief. "No, no," he said, "not your chief, only your leader in the way Mr. Rundle has shown us until another missionary comes who will lead you and teach you better than I can."

In the fourth year of their wandering, the mother of Three Arrows found them and brought a message. Chief Two Horses had died, and the tribe wanted Three Arrows to go to them and be their new chief.

"Trader Rankin," his mother concluded, "says that you must come."

"Will our people then become Christians, and stop

war and horse stealing and rum drinking?" asked Three Arrows.

"I cannot promise," said his mother.

"Then I cannot promise to come to them," replied Three Arrows. "But you, mother, stay with us as long as you like."

She stayed and was deeply impressed with all that she saw and heard. The singing of the sweet hymns by the fireside deeply touched her and awakened her soul. She asked Three Arrows much about the way of Christ, and he was happy to tell her. Before many days she declared she believed it was the right way, and she asked the Christian people to pray for her, that Christ would speak peace to her heart as he had spoken to theirs.

But she was greatly concerned about her son. She would mother him still, as though he were a child and not the wise Christian leader that he was.

"You are killing yourself," she told him. "You have no tent of your own, and no wife to care for you. When others go to rest, you take your Bible and go away to some hilltop and read by moonlight or starlight or firelight, and you watch and watch, and pray and pray. Then all the next day you are again occupied with the people."

"I am the healthiest and happiest man in this camp," replied Three Arrows, trying to be lightly

pleasant. But his mother would have none of his pleasantries.

"You take the whole burden of the life of this people on your head," she protested. "There are other good men here, and they have their own tent and their own wife and their children. So ought you."

"Someone must watch," said *Three Arrows*, "for there are enemies. Someone must pray—it is so easy to forget and to lose the heavenly way. Then, too, our good books are wearing out and we must put much of the truth in our memories."

"You are wise about your people," said his mother, "but you are not wise about yourself."

"Stay with me and I will build you a lodge," said *Three Arrows*. "Then I will have a place of my own."

"I cannot mother your children," she said. And she thought, "I will see Ben Sinclair and Kischeepowat about this matter of a home for my son."

The mother of *Three Arrows* stayed long enough to have him build her a separate tent, and to persuade him to share the night watches with others. She did not succeed in the mission upon which the tribe had sent her, but she became the means of doing the persecuted band several favors. Trader

Rankin was glad to hear about Three Arrows and the faithfulness of his little band of Christians, and through her he sent presents, including some new Bibles, Testaments and hymnbooks which were most welcome.

But these favors did not last long, for Mr. Rankin was transferred to another post beyond their reach. Before he left, however, he sent a parting message to Three Arrows, commanding him and bidding him be faithful to the end. God and Christian people, he said, would surely send them a missionary soon; moreover, life was short, and then, to the faithful, heaven opened. There, if he did not meet him again on earth, he expected to see Three Arrows, and together they would meet at the feet of Jesus, who had opened the way of everlasting life to them both.

Three Arrows was deeply touched with this message and though it was the turn of Ben Sinclair to spend the night in watching on the hilltop, he begged the privilege that night. He said he had much to say to the Great Spirit, and his heart was full.

The little help that Mr. Rankin could send to the band had meant much to their comfort, and they missed him greatly. They had now wandered so far north—between two and three hundred miles from Pigeon Lake—that they had not been molested for

many months. So they began to assume a more settled abode, and built their lodges beside Whitefish Lake.

Here they lived for five years. Then, one summer evening, some of the young Indians of Three Arrows' village, trained by him to be the sharpest scouts on the plains, saw a black-coated man and several companions wander over the land. The newcomers were looking sharply and fearfully about them, and stopped often to look and listen, as people do when they are lost in an enemy's country. They were some distance from the camp, not near enough to be a menace, and as they were few in number besides, the scouts merely watched them and did not hasten to report their presence.

"There are many signs of Indians around here," the scouts heard the leader say. "The Indians to the south are on the warpath, so we must have a care that we do not fall into evil hands."

As was his custom, when the shadows of night began to gather around them Three Arrows assembled his people for evening worship. They sang their favorite hymn that night with great heartiness, and the breeze wafted the words and music down the plains to the newcomers. The effect it had upon these strangers surprised the watchers.

"There are Indians here," said the leader loudly,

and casting all fear and caution aside he added, "but they are Christians. Listen to that hymn!"

"You had better be cautious, father," said a gentle, warning voice. "There can be no Christians in this land—it is ten years since Mr. Rundle left it. Wild Indians as well as Christians know how to sing."

The scouts saw the black-coated man listen intently to the song. "Those men are not wild Indians," he declared, "they are Christians." And he walked boldly towards the camp.

The scouts crept quickly around to warn Three Arrows, but as they came up he was on his knees in the center of the group, and with bared head and closed eyes was leading the company in prayer. How often they had heard him pray that prayer! "O Lord, have mercy upon us. We are like little chickens just broken from the shell. We need a kind parent to help us. Oh, send us another missionary like Mr. Rundle!"

When the black-coated man saw the people bowed and at prayer, he stopped and bowed his own head. He could hardly believe that he had toiled many days through prairies infested with warring bands and that he was in a strange wild western land. The scene before him carried him back to the blessed work around Norway House and the Christian Indian bands of that mission.

"God be praised!" he exclaimed at the conclusion of the prayer he had heard. "I am here in answer to your prayer. I have traveled for many days and have met with only danger and trouble. I never expected to find a band of Indians like this. Tell me who you are."

The Indians were at first startled at the presence and voice of the stranger, and Three Arrows looked sharply for his scouts and was ready to demand an account from them. But the words and manner of the black-coated man calmed and captivated him. "We are Mr. Rundle's converts," he explained simply, as he faced the newcomer.

"And I have been sent by Christian people to take up Mr. Rundle's work," said the stranger. "My name is Steinhauer, and I am to be your new missionary."

He then called the surprised people again to prayer and poured out his soul to God in a prayer full of thanksgiving and in their own tongue. The people were thrilled with delight. Three Arrows now welcomed him heartily and wished to hand over the reins of power to him at once.

"No, no," said Mr. Steinhauer, "I am only to be the missionary, I am not to be chief. Now we shall hear all about what you have done since Mr. Rundle left." And when he did hear, the heart of the mis-

sionary was filled with joy and thanksgiving. "It is a new chapter in the Acts of the Apostles," he said, "a story of faithfulness to gospel teachings that will thrill all who hear it."

Mr. Steinhauer was particularly impressed with the account Ben Sinclair and the other lieutenants gave him of the part that Three Arrows had played in preserving their lives, watching over the band, and keeping up the teaching of the Bible to the young people. "We shall never let you go," he said to Three Arrows. "There will always be a place for you in our mission work."

When Mr. Steinhauer brought in his family and mission party, there was another great surprise for Three Arrows. In their midst was a fine-looking Indian woman with bright, flashing eyes, who watched Three Arrows keenly. Her dress and manner revealed education and refinement.

"This is Wanda," said Mr. Steinhauer in introducing her to the Indians. "She is a Cree of the plains, returning to her home country determined to find again her own people. She is a good Christian woman and has been of great help to us in our mission work."

"Wanda!" exclaimed Three Arrows, rushing over to her, much to the surprise of Mr. Steinhauer. In his eagerness he almost brushed the missionary aside

as he took Wanda's hands in his and looked into her eyes.

"Yes, I am Wanda, Three Arrows. I left you a little girl; I am now a woman." She spoke calmly, looking at him bravely but with a throbbing heart. "Whatever does he think of me as I am now?" was her thought. "He has forgotten me long ago, no doubt, and has another woman in his tent." Then she added, as Three Arrows continued to look at her and seemed incapable of speech, "Have you forgotten me?"

"Forgotten you!" exclaimed Three Arrows, at last finding his tongue. "Never, not for one day since you were stolen from us. I have searched the plains for you and Omeme. I found Omeme in the tent of Big Wolf, chief of the Bloods. She told me you had been sold to a white trader and taken away, perhaps to the white man's country. You have never been out of my thoughts, and in these last ten years you have had a place in my daily prayer; and now God, the Good One, has permitted me again to see your face. But which is the happy man in this band who is your husband, Wanda?"

"No man is my husband," said Wanda, "and no man is likely to be, since you are now chief of this band with doubtless a tent of your own."

"Then you know not Three Arrows," said he, his

heart full of gladness. "Thank God I have not waited in vain, for now you are mine, my wife, my Wanda." He clasped her to his breast, and all the people rejoiced at the wonderful way their beloved leader and his sweetheart had been brought together after so many years of separation.

Wanda's story was soon told. The white man who had bought her and desired her for his wife, resolved that she should be educated, and sent her to Montreal. While on his way to meet her there he was drowned. The Hudson's Bay Company's officials had turned Wanda over to the care of missionaries, and with them she had found her way back to Norway House. She had been employed by Mr. Steinhauer for some time, and was delighted when he was ordered to the plains, for in that way she hoped to get back again to her own people.

The wedding between Three Arrows and Wanda was not long delayed. Everybody in the camp determined to make it happy and memorable, but the most supremely happy woman there was the mother of Three Arrows. She rejoiced that her noble son had at last found a woman for his tent, and that this woman was his old sweetheart Wanda. But she wondered if, in her life amongst strange white people, Wanda had forgotten what the mother thought were the good and faithful Indian ways of wifely service

to her man. The older woman could not help but study the younger one, to see what the white people, and, above all, the missionary people had done to her. But the more she saw of her, the greater reason she had to rejoice, Wanda had not forgotten any of the noble Indian traditions of fidelity and service, and she had learned much from the white people. The mother soon realized that her son, good man as he was, had been given a woman eminently worthy of him, and one whose training had been such as to enable her to help him in the great work upon which he had now set his heart.

Leaving Three Arrows in charge of the people at Whitefish Lake, Mr. Steinhauer with Ben Sinclair went on to Edmonton and made a survey of the work attempted by Mr. Rundle. When they returned to the village they had another surprise for Three Arrows. At Edmonton they had met Omeme, trying to find her brother. Chief Big Wolf had died, and she had escaped from the band and gone to Edmonton, where she had entered the service of the fort people. Now, having met Mr. Steinhauer and Ben Sinclair, she had come back with them.

His sister was warmly welcomed not only by Three Arrows but by Wanda, and even more by her stepmother, who took her to her heart.

As he looked about him, Mr. Steinhauer was

deeply impressed with the wisdom of Three Arrows in his choice of a site for a permanent village for the Christian converts. He at once set to work enthusiastically to teach them how to develop their village in the ways of civilization; to build better houses, and to plow and till the soil.

Now that the band had a real missionary again to lead and teach and guide them, Three Arrows felt the call of another mission in his heart. "What idea is this, Three Arrows?" asked Mr. Steinhauer. "You must not think of leaving our work! When the men at the head of our missionary society know of the great things you have done for this people, they will not hear of it. You mean too much to us—to the people, and to the work generally."

"It is because my own people are now for peace and they want a teacher," said Three Arrows earnestly.

"Good," said the wise missionary. "To them we shall send you."

Three Arrows and his family were delighted with this arrangement, but the members of the village were filled at first with consternation. Three Arrows had been so much to them, and they had grown to feel so safe under his rule and protection, that they were in dismay at the thought of his departure. He assured them that it would be all right—they had a

real missionary with them, Ben Sinclair would be their school teacher, and Kecheyees would be head-man in the village and they could make him chief. They parted from him with deepest regret. "You have been so much to us," they said, clinging to him. "You have been more than a leader; you have been a loving elder brother."

But the band of Two Horses could not find words to express their delight at the return of Three Arrows and his party. Scouts were far out on the plains watching for them, for the news of their coming had preceded them; and at the first sign of their approach the whole band rushed out to meet them and bring them in with honor.

The men searched amongst the horses for Whirlwind. They noticed that Three Arrows rode a fine horse, young and strong and beautiful, looking like a glorified Whirlwind, and that Wanda was on a slightly smaller horse which was the very picture of the Whirlwind they had known. The Indians asked if these horses were colts of Whirlwind. Three Arrows smiled at the eager men and said that the horse he rode was Whirlwind's grandson, while Wanda rode on her daughter. But it was the old Whirlwind they wished to see again. She was not far behind Three Arrows, ambling along by herself, not even a pack on her back. Her legs were stiff, showing the

effects of her twenty years of service, but she held her head proudly and was the same old Whirlwind that they had loved. They fell upon her, decorated her with colored streamers, put red and white feathers in her mane and tail, and led her proudly into the camp, following close after her master and his bride.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE STORY

IN *By Canoe and Dog-Train*, by the Rev. Egerton R. Young, my father, will be found an interview between the author and an Indian missionary, the Rev. H. B. Steinhauer. Born in a wigwam in Canada, this Indian was chosen, named by and trained at the expense of Mr. Henry Steinhauer of Philadelphia. He became a noted scholar, translator and interpreter. In 1869 he was stationed as a missionary at White Fish Lake and had an experience he once recounted to my father, that of finding a band of faithful Christian Indians pleading with God "to send them another missionary like Rundle." The incident is retold in the last chapter of this book, although those Indians prayed for twenty years rather than for ten.

This incident has always thrilled me, but not always in the way interpreted by the missionaries. They emphasize the work done by Mr. Rundle as having been so thorough-going that it remained in evidence all those years after his departure. This is very true, but the real hero to my mind has always been the Christian Indian who rallied the persecuted disciples, led them into the northern wilderness, and comforted and sustained them during those long and weary years. Moreover, what he did was no single act of heroism, over and done with in a moment, but the challenging again and again, for years on years, of the evil forces that would destroy the human spirit and overthrow a noble work. It

took a real man. That man has long been my hero, of him I have thought and dreamed, and in this book I have tried to reveal him in the character of *Three Arrows*.

The Rev. Robert T. Rundle, the first missionary to the Indians of the plains and foothills of the Canadian west, was born in Cornwall, England, in 1811. He was a zealous evangelist, a great traveler, small in stature but brave in spirit and ready to endure any hardship. Leaving England he landed in New York and proceeded to Montreal, where he began his long and tortuous canoe trip of three thousand miles to Fort Edmonton, which he reached in September, 1840. This fort, organized in 1795, was the most important post of the Hudson's Bay Company west of Fort Garry. With it as his center, Mr. Rundle did mission work in an immense territory round about, now the Province of Alberta. He was deeply impressed by the mountains and climbed one of the most imposing of them near Banff which now bears his name. After eight years of faithful work his health failed and he was sent back to England. He hoped to return to his work but was not permitted. He served several charges in England, however, and died there in 1890 greatly honored and beloved.

Big Wolf, chief of the Blood tribe, and Crooked Arm, chief of the Crees, are both historic characters. In *The Vanguards of Canada* Dr. John Maclean speaks of Robert Rundle's courage in facing Big Wolf, for Big Wolf was "one of the greatest warriors among the tribes on the plains," and before him "the missionary might well hesitate in the delivery of his message of peace."

"But was there such a man as *Three Arrows*?" someone persists in asking. In *Forest, Lake and Prairie*, a book of personal experiences written by the Rev. John McDougall,

the author says, as he gives an account of his arrival at White Fish Lake Mission, "Here we met Benjamin Sinclair, who had come into the Saskatchewan country as assistant to the Rev. Robert Rundle, who was the first missionary of any church to the tribes of this western country. . . . Big, strong and honest and a mighty hunter was old Ben Sinclair."

Dr. Maclean in the book already referred to speaks of Ben Sinclair as "another of Rundle's men," and reports: "The missionary instructed Sinclair to establish a mission on the shore of Pigeon Lake, but a party of Blackfeet killed some of Rundle's disciples about ten miles from the lake, and Sinclair and his party were driven over two hundred miles into the northern country, and the [Pigeon Lake] mission was not begun. Sinclair, however, laid the foundation of an important mission at White Fish Lake, where Henry B. Steinhauer labored for many years until his death."

Three Arrows may thus be a glorified Ben Sinclair, while the Ben Sinclair of this book may be a man of our imagination, more or less. The lives, deeds and heroic services of such boys as those two Indians, Ben Sinclair and Henry Steinhauer, whether told in fact or fiction are ever a testimony to the transforming and inspiring power of the gospel and the work done by Christian missionaries.

E. R. Y.